

# THE SMART SET

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## CONTENTS

The Progenitress	G. Vere Tyler	1
Night Travel	Arthur Stringer	44
In the Toils of the Wire	Roy Melbourne Chalmers	44
The Magic Song	Zona Gale	45
In Absence	Frank Dempster Sherman	48
The Bishop's Wild Oats	Jean D. Hollowell	49
The Fall of a Feather	Bettie R. Cocke	54
Vice Versa	G. M. Fergess	54
In the Very Best Society	Alfred Sutro	55
Way o' Love	Beatrice E. Rice	62
Bella's Waterloo	Gelett Burgess	63
The Joint-Stocking of Walmers	Charles M. Skinner	65
Tulips	R. K. Munkittrick	73
Kismet	Reginald Wright Kauffman	74
The Pompadour's Protégé	Kate Jordan Vermilby	75
Enchantment	Charlotte Becker	87
Pseudonyms	Frank Roe Batchelder	88
Old Capulet's Daughter	James Branch Cabell	89
From Cupid's Quivers	L. de V. Matthewman	100
The Two Grandfathers	Dora Siegerson	101
Life	Ella Wheeler Wilcox	107
In the Night	Mabel Earle	108
An Educational Glimpse	Hayden Carruth	109
Exorcism	Elsa Barker	111
In the House of Morn	Sennett Stephens	112
A Fable	Sidney Brett	112
Vers de Société in English	Brander Matthews	113
Too Late	Seumas MacManus	121
The Kiss	Edwin L. Sabin	122
An International Affair	Frank Savile	123
Triumph	Charles Hanson Towne	132
A Question of Values	Mrs. Wilson Woodrow	133
The Mills of the Gods	Edna Kenton	135
According to Orders	Margaret Johnson	144
Les Roses	Albert Boissière	145
Time	Theodosia Garrison	148
After the Betrothal	Nannie Byrd Turner	148
The Tale of a Porcelain Tub	Katharine La Farge Norton	149
Le Sentier	Vicomte J. de Beaufort	151
Where Did We Go, Dear?	John Vance Cheney	152
A Taste in Common	John Strange Winter	153
Manning Her Craft	G. Ray Horton	160

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*The October number of THE SMART SET will contain:  
"We of Adam's Clay," by Cosmo Hamilton*

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*Among the other contributors to the October number will be: Julien Gordon, The Baroness von Hutten, Herbert  
D. Ward, Martha McCulloch-Williams, Prince Vladimir Vaniatsky and Douglas Sladen.*

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# THE PROGENITRESS

By G. Vere Tyler

SHE was as beautiful as the bud of the lotus. She had the wild carriage of the antelope and the grace of the swan. Her being shed a perfume like sandalwood bathed in musk. She stood defiantly, full of conscious pride, and men swarmed about her like bees about an over-sweet flower. Her silken hair was long and wavy, and framed her face deliciously, like the disk of a full moon. Her brow was pure, and her eyebrows crossed it like two crescents. Her eyes, large and brilliant, slept or glowed with her mood; occasionally, a yellow flame shone in their dark, velvet depths. Her lips, a deep scarlet, covered two rows of even teeth, white as the petals of a jasmine flower. She was a creature made for delights, and she dazzled as the sun does. She knew how to enhance her beauty, and clothed herself in tawny stuffs that caused you to expect the markings of a tigress to shoot out and gleam. Her heart and soul were undeveloped, but she glowed in the possession of splendid health and all the characteristics of a beautiful animal.

She was an animal; her emotions were instincts. She cared little for society. Her delight was herself, and self absorbed her. Her life was, in fact, one long self-rejoicing. That was her occupation. She could lie by the hour in the sun's glow, watching the sheen of her satin skin, or in the artificial light of darkened rooms, holding a hand-mirror, and peering into it at her marvelous eyes.

She drew her breath through air heavily laden with flowers or perfumes, and existed felicitously on her own

charms. She would festoon herself in flowers and laces, and stand alone, like a statue. Just as men produced masterpieces, she felt that God had produced a masterpiece in her.

She delighted in the spectacular, and was herself always spectacular. Her costumes glittered and scintillated upon her, and her surroundings were bewildering and unique. People who entered her home, experienced surprise; those who left it, passed out as from a dream. As she delighted in herself, she chose that others should delight in her. To appear and produce a breathless tableau, with conversation suspended, was what appealed to her. Women who hated her for her power, and attempted to thwart her plans, were easily subdued. The men did it for her. There was something dauntless and courageous in her that both sexes feared. She had no fear, either of man or woman, and was in no way dependent upon either for her entertainment.

In a way, she considered women of more consequence than men, because she could conceive of one, under favorable circumstances, becoming an antagonist. As a rule, however, they were modified editions of herself, who bored her, and she scorned them for their lack of beauty as well as for their lack of power. Their wonder and envy pleased her, but she preferred the admiration of men. She drifted from them, and remained in her shrine, as a priestess who is hourly adored. To her, a man was a being without weapons, who could be bewildered and dismissed. She prided herself that her conquests were made without self-

Sept. 1903-1

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surrender. Rarely was it necessary to grant favors. What she wished was to bring men to her feet; once there, that was the end. She would have preferred them more difficult. When she studied the lives of the saints, the chronicle of these strange beings fascinated her. If only such a one—a man who could resist women—might appear in her time! Her imagination, which was excessive, would inflame at the thought, and she would laugh, and go and study herself in a full-length mirror.

Mirrors were her supreme delight, and she would not have exchanged a satisfactory one for the fairest lake the green earth held. Mirrors! They were a mystery—a magic art that enabled her to see herself. They adorned her ceilings as well as her walls. She liked to lie in a kind of dream, looking up at herself in adoration. She had the lights so arranged that she could stretch forth her arm, and flood herself with different colors. She studied the blue veins that traversed her, the tips of her finger-nails; and, in a kind of ecstatic awe, she felt the beating of her heart beneath her hand.

Life was a succession of experiments and effects, born of savage egotism. She stimulated herself on admiration, as some women stimulate themselves on wine. She was indiscriminate, and allowed no man, from him who papered her walls to the prince at an entertainment, to pass her way and not remember her ever after, even though simply as a vision. She had discovered that, so far as she was concerned, one method applied to all, and, after she had dazzled them, she dismissed them. Men hunt certain kinds of game in this way, simply for the sport, and scarcely ever realize their cruelty.

She had never grown accustomed to the fact that she was a beautiful creature in a beautiful world, with weapons within herself that produced havoc. What was the meaning of it all? She saw nothing more in herself than in a flower. Both were blooming to be admired. Being, while entirely uncon-

scious of it, more than a merely beautiful animal, there were times when she was wearied and filled with self-disgust, but she had no knowledge as to the cause of this sensation, and cured the mood by beginning again.

Her ways with men were, to her, self-admitted tricks. She often felt, upon dismissing one, that she would like to explain, as the prestidigitator sometimes did, what had deluded and held people spellbound. If only one man, of himself, would read her! If only one man would not fall! If only one would rise up at the end, and strike her a blow full in the face! But they never did; they crawled out of her way like the whipped hounds she remembered on her father's Southern plantation. How she had despised those hounds! "Burn them with irons," she had once cried, "to see if there is no spirit in them!"

The sunset streamed through an opal-tinted window, and she reclined lazily in the warmth and glory of it in a pile of embroidered sofa-pillows that deluged an enormous, pale-blue velvet couch. She was looking at her dainty feet, encased in gold-embroidered slippers, and her long, fair lashes shaded her cheek. A man, seated bolt upright in a chair, was looking at her. He had asked a question which she had not answered.

Presently, she shifted her gaze, and gently raised her arms until the delicate lace that decorated her sleeves fell back to her shoulders. For a moment, she examined her uplifted hands critically, and then answered, slowly: "If I told you, you would not believe me."

"I don't know," he replied, eagerly; "I might. With all your faults, you are frank."

"Thank you."

"Not that you deserve any credit for it," he half sneered.

"No—" she smiled, indolently—"because I commenced the other way."

"And what caused you to change?" he inquired, cynically.

"I found it too much trouble."

"You mean that you were too clever



to lie!" His voice was harsh and tremulous.

"Perhaps; but, you see, I have to be clever."

"We all have to be—we who are in the world," he laughed.

"But *I*, especially."

"Why?"

"I have clever slaves."

"Men?"

"Certainly."

"Who is the latest?"

"It doesn't matter," she answered. "There are few celebrities."

"Your condescension might make one so—temporarily."

"You surely are not jealous?" She opened her eyes, innocently.

"No," he answered, "I am no longer jealous." And he added, under his breath, "Thank God!"

"Then why do my admirers interest you?"

"One always likes to hear of those traveling a path once familiar to him."

"That is curiosity."

"Possibly. The one I passed going out as I entered, looked like a starved rat cast out of an old barn."

Evelyn laughed. "He is as poor as the proverbial church mouse."

"Then the attraction?"

"Contrast. He is so unlike you—and the others."

"I see."

There was silence for a time. Evelyn continued to examine her hands, placing them in front of the light of the setting sun until the tips and inside of the fingers were pink-tinted and clear as a cameo.

"Look at those fine, blue veins," she said, finally, without glancing at him; "aren't they queer?"

He made no reply.

"You detest me, don't you, Arnold?"

"Yes," he answered, hotly, "I do."

"Even those poor little veins?"

"Every particle of you."

"Men are so foolish," she answered, dropping her hands, dejectedly, "such slaves. Oh, not to women—to themselves, their senses—what women arouse in them. And, oh, what power

it puts into the women's hands! Even that poor fellow is giving himself the privilege of indulging his."

"You mean that you are giving him the privilege."

"I never could follow puzzling distinctions," answered Evelyn, petulantly.

"Why do you tolerate such beings?"

"I become interested in them. I like to see what they will do."

"Which is a polite excuse to yourself for unworthy experiments."

"Perhaps; one never really knows why things are done. I like to look on at my own life and the effect it produces on others, just as people go to the theatre to see things."

"Provided you are the heroine."

"Certainly."

"And the end of your performances?"

"I leave before the fourth act. Why are you always thinking of ends?" she complained, wearily.

The sun had left the window, and she looked pale in the opal light.

"They come," he retorted, rising to his feet, abruptly. "Mine came!"

"And yet you never looked better. You were away two years, weren't you?"

"Yes; until I knew that my love for you was dead."

She rose to a sitting posture, and fixed her eyes on his.

"It isn't dead," she said, simply.

"You may think not," he sneered.

"A man doesn't fly to the woman he has ceased to love to tell her of it. I know—for some have really ceased to love me."

"And what did they do?"

"Told other women they had never loved me. You may do that some day. Why did you come here so quickly?"

"I wished to convince myself."

"And you believe, I suppose, that you have done so?"

"Yes, for I know you as you are—for what you are."

"You always did; I never made any pretenses."

"But I couldn't see you then—I was blind." He sat down again. "Let us change the subject. What especial nerve of vanity has that unattractive being inflamed?"

She pushed the hair, that was like spun gold, from her face.

"I don't know. I never attempt to analyze. I do a thing, or, through me, it does itself; that is all I know. Why does a bird alight on a fence but to fly away again? It might have kept on flying or alighted on a tree. It doesn't know. Neither do I."

"Are you as a bird?" asked Arnold, leaning forward. "Haven't you any heart or conscience?"

"I don't know anything about such things. I was never intended to have them. Do you know, Arnold, what a woman with a conscience develops into—have you ever examined one? They get bones for shoulders."

"I have seen even worse developments," he retorted.

"Never mind what you have seen! So have I, but I am what I am. Suppose a certain man is stupid—suppose he can't talk; suppose he hasn't any accomplishments—what of it? They are all more or less like that to me, and, really, it doesn't matter. If one of them has never enjoyed himself it is more interesting. I reveal things to him."

"That is but another excuse to yourself," said Arnold.

"It may be! How do I know? How does any one of us know about anything?" She looked dreamily at him.

"I have told you—conscience tells them," said Arnold, a little awkwardly.

"But I haven't any conscience, and, what is more, I don't want any!" There were moments when she liked to baffle by her intelligence. "But how can *you* say what motive prompts me? Suppose that I can go deeper than you into motives. How do you know that I cannot?"

"I don't," he admitted; "you are very clever."

"Suppose what you call 'wicked,' I call the opposite—'good.' Listen, now! Is it not a kindness that I let

such beings into my presence?—that I give them my time, dress to please their eyes, let them look upon me, grow intoxicated by beholding me, though all the while holding them in contempt? Isn't that kindness?"

Arnold shrugged his shoulders.

"It isn't cruel," she went on, "to take people to a beautiful play, is it, simply because you know they have to return to their bare surroundings? That's about all that I do. Why isn't it kind to take a man for a short time into a seventh heaven?"

Arnold breathed a little quickly. "And when they have passed through their heavens?"

He awaited her answer, which she seemed to be considering.

The room had grown quite dark, and the servant was lighting the lamps. The jewels flashed out on Evelyn.

"I don't know," she said, glittering as she changed her position, "I haven't thought."

"I'll tell you." He leaned forward, and took her wrist. "Sometimes they blow their brains out—this one may."

"You didn't."

"I? No; I had something to fall back on—to look forward to."

"This hour," she smiled, releasing her hand. "What a handsome man you have developed into!" she added, studying his face. Then she glanced at the clock.

"There are people coming to dinner," she said, quickly. "Tell me, will you come to my box during the evening?"

"No," said Arnold, with flashing eyes, "I won't! I refuse to be used for your entertainment," he continued, angrily. "Because I have won some distinction, you want to show me to them. You want the world to see that you still have me at your feet."

"Suppose I do! How stupid you are—you men! What are a woman's triumphs to a man's rewards?"

Arnold started; then, collecting himself, he replied, "That is your cleverness; I know *your* rewards!"

She arose, laid one snow-white, violet-tinted hand, with its long, slender

fingers gleaming with jewels, on his arm, and he flushed. The odor of her hair, the same that had reached him in his waking or sleeping dreams of her during all those two years of absence, was now a reality that penetrated his nostrils, and seemed to reach his brain and cloud it.

"There are chances in life," she said, lightly, through half-closed lids.

"And some men fling their lives away for them," he returned. "I shall be there."

He left her, and Evelyn stood for a moment thinking how different it might have been for him if he had refused. A fierce contempt for the weakness of men came over her, and once more she reveled in her own strength.

Her guests were four men, who, after a few words, followed her rather stupidly into the dining-room.

She leaned over, exposing, for the moment, her exquisite shoulders through their shower of lace and gems, and picked from the table a cluster of pale-green grapes.

When she had the attention of all fixed upon her, she lifted her chin, and placed the grapes in close proximity to her scarlet mouth. The four men leaned forward and gazed at the exquisite picture she made, and then joy permeated her.

## II

STATESMANSHIP rarely accompanies those qualities which make the successful practical politician. Jean Etienne Patrick McMahon was the exception to the rule. He was one of those men who, without training, are fitted for the consideration of large affairs, whether local, state, national or international.

His presence was imposing, but, while he dominated, he charmed. His voice, irrespective of words, was convincing. His tones, as well as what he said, subjugated his hearers, and his magnetism—the magnetism of strength and repression—held them. He understood the world, and, what

was more, he understood himself. He prided himself upon the fact that he was the direct descendant of kings. His nobility could not be questioned in a land where the ill-preserved descendant of feudal nobles still flourished. Unlike these, though, there was no confusion in his mind. He not only knew his lineage well, but why it produced him. He sprang from those magnificent Irish who, of their very strength, went forth to give their services to France, Spain, Austria and the South American republics. He was the natural result of those victors who remained to enjoy their laurels but who never forsook their names, their characteristics or their religious faith.

Jean Etienne Patrick McMahon, his father, was christened in France, and he, the first born, was christened in America. Cast in the heroic mold of noble ancestors, this grave Hercules had the manner and bearing of a god. Physically, he towered above men like a Colossus.

At the age of forty, with an enormous fortune accumulated, and with politics and public life behind him, he still stood, the undisputed dictator of a continent, the moldier of the policy of a nation as well as a maker of presidents. He was frequently called into important conferences; beyond that he refused to give himself. To him, the object of life was self-development and the joy of existing for that purpose.

Time had increased, rather than diminished, his vigor. There was not a gray hair in the raven locks, not a trace of the middle-age upon the threshold of which he stood. To the beholder, he suggested strength and victory. His appetites and passions, both violent, had long been dissected and arranged for use. All the possible vices of a great nature lay at the bottom of the virtues, but he had control of them. He stifled nothing, yet he obeyed nothing. He recognized the supreme rights of a being who had made himself worthy of supreme rights. He indulged in mag-

nificance in the highest sense of the word—the magnificence that ennobles self and enriches others. He developed his body to the utmost extent of its powers, and cultivated his fertile mind so that it was as much at home in the wisdom of the ancients as in the advanced ideas of the moderns.

His houses, or, rather, palaces, expressed the nobility of the architecture of Greece and Rome, together with all the latter-day elegances. His life was that of a pagan in the guise of a Christian.

He had never married. He believed in women as breeders of sons. That was their value, their purpose, what they existed for. In the majority of instances, woman was the necessary evil in a man's life. Being the last of his name, he desired to perpetuate it. For this reason, at the present time the contemplation of women interested him. He was in search of one who would become his wife and the mother of Jean Etienne Patrick McMahon the third. Often, then, he attended social functions, balls and the opera; he talked with women, examined and considered them. Their brains or hearts or characters were not taken into consideration. What he wanted was a perfect animal in whom the maternal instinct was alive, just as it was alive in the leopard or the tigress or the antelope—a woman who would protect the child in its infancy solely through that instinct, and then leave it to him.

The woman he sought was difficult to find in the higher walks of life, yet there she must be found. There must be no retardation of the perfect man, no ancestral taint to cross the McMahon lineage. This line of thought was taken up only when he felt the necessity for it. Not that his life had been spent without the association of women; far from it, but it was not in his nature, or in accordance with his observation, to take them seriously. Just as he walked among his magnificent flower-gardens to soothe and rest

his senses, he walked among women. That they were companions, he considered a myth. He had never met one who responded to his requirement in that capacity, and love, such as youth conceived, had long since been put aside as a dream. Women were women, and those not engaged in their natural occupation of bearing children might delight the eye and while away an hour. He could conceive of no rights for a woman beyond the physical. He had never met one whose rights or wrongs a jewel would not assuage. He rarely talked with them, finding his presence sufficient entertainment for them. He very rarely caressed one, for if he did she became troublesome. His personality and fostered strength intoxicated them. His grave, classic face, out of which shone deep-purple eyes beneath heavy brows, his thick, black hair, the low, but profound, brow, the clean-shaven lips and chiseled mouth overcame them at once. When his inherited spiritual cast of countenance brought the more impulsive ones, figuratively, to his feet, he walked away. Their reverence was passion.

They were evenly matched, Evelyn Stanhope and himself—both lawless, both conquerors, both scornors of the opposite sex. In her eyes men were slaves; in his, women were child-bearers or playthings. She thought of herself as the mistress of men; he, of himself as the master of women. She had contempt for slaves; he, tolerance for weaklings.

On a certain evening in the latter part of January, they attended a ball given by a mutual acquaintance. They, as well as the rest of the guests, had arrived under difficulties. An afternoon snow-storm had blocked the streets. Both had considered the advisability of remaining indoors, and both, with a similar object in view, had come, he to meet her; she to meet him. He had heard of her as a rarely beautiful woman; she of him as a masterful man.

At two o'clock, just after supper had

been served, she was standing surrounded by a coterie of men in the recess of a flower-draped window. He stood in the centre of the same room beneath a chandelier, surrounded by a coterie of men and women.

For a moment, as Evelyn intuitively discovered him, there seemed to emanate from him a gloom through which he radiated, powerful and distinct. Occasionally, he glanced in her direction; occasionally, she glanced in his. Each felt the delight of past conquests—his of things; hers of men. Each felt secure. Evelyn, in a cloth-of-gold costume and blazing in rubies, outshone her resplendent self. Excitement gleamed in her eyes, and burnt on her crimson mouth.

Suddenly, Arnold Venable approached her. His face was pale. She had deceived him as of old, and a story had come to him during the day which had filled him with horror, and, while out of her presence, with detestation.

"I heard of it—his horrible end," he said to her, abruptly.

"Yes; he did it," she replied, calmly, "just as you said he would."

"And you?"

"I?"

"Yes, you."

"Why *me*? I don't know anything about it. It occurred, that is all. I suppose it was horrible, but to me it seemed quite natural, just as though it had been all planned. Look at that man standing beneath the chandelier."

"Who?"

"The big one."

"Well, what of him?"

"He is superb looking, that is all." There was a slight sneer in her voice.

"You should be thinking of that other one who wasn't superb looking, lying dead there in the undertaker's shop."

"Why should I?" and her gaze met his defiantly. "That was his part, this is mine."

"You're a barbarian," said Arnold, fiercely.

"Perhaps, but such things don't af-

fect me. It's all like seeing a play. You know what I am."

"Yes," he answered, "I know."

She turned her attention to the men around her who had fallen to conversing together. One of them had made a remark that attracted her. What she heard him say was, "That woman's true success lay in her subjugation."

"You surely do not mean that, Mr. Robertson?" she asked, interrupting him.

"I really do, Mrs. Stanhope."

"Then you do not consider me a success?" She smiled.

"Objectively, I do."

"That is non-committal," said Evelyn.

"What do you mean by success, Robertson?" asked one of the men.

"A being who has exploited himself or herself to advantage."

"And what have I been doing?" Evelyn asked, laughing.

"Exploiting others."

"To their ruin," Arnold interjected.

"Oh, I did not say that!" remonstrated Robertson.

"No; only Mr. Venable could be so rude," said Evelyn, flashing upon Arnold an angry glance.

"She may not have exploited you," retorted Arnold, forgetting himself, and walking off.

"Poor fellow," remarked Robertson, following Arnold's broad, handsome back with a glance, "he can't cure himself, Mrs. Stanhope." Then he laughed. "He carries himself like a man with a secret ache."

"He is young," said Evelyn, indifferently. "But tell me more of this success, this exploiting of one's self; it interests me."

"There is a man who is, from my standpoint, a success," he replied, nodding toward McMahon.

"Senator McMahon?"

"Yes."

"What do you know of him?" Evelyn asked, betraying her interest.

"Oh, nothing, except in a general way, as every one knows of him."

"Then why," she persisted, "do



you affirm his life such an especially successful one?"

"Well," replied Robertson, getting away from seriousness, "he doesn't allow himself to be exploited by women."

"Possibly his time has not yet come," said Evelyn.

"Or possibly it has," said Robertson, close in her ear, as he noticed his hostess coming toward them, followed by the ex-senator, whose massive head was well lifted.

"May I introduce to you the Honorable Mr. McMahon, Mrs. Stanhope?" asked the lady of the house, beaming.

When Evelyn had acknowledged the introduction by a studied lowering of her head, the hostess continued, hurriedly:

"The majority of introductions are stupid in the extreme, senator, but when one makes the most brilliant man of an assemblage acquainted with the most beautiful woman, it becomes interesting." And she moved gracefully away.

"This introduction is likely to prove more interesting to me than to you, senator," said Evelyn, with a bewitching glance.

"How is that, madame?" demanded McMahon, gravely.

"To tell you would be to rob myself of the advantage."

"You then guard your advantages?" asked the senator, eying her quickly.

"Do not all women?" queried Evelyn, impudently.

"All merely clever women—yes."

"Merely clever?" she exclaimed.

"Yes, there are others possessing more than cleverness who enjoy surrendering their advantages."

Evelyn laughed as she looked up at him. "You depreciate cleverness in women, then?"

"Clever women are uninteresting," remarked the senator, carelessly; and Evelyn felt that, although they had hurried into a conversation, he was studying her.

"Oh, I know very well," she exclaimed, lightly, "that you are not an admirer of our sex!"

"Yes?"

"Great men," she continued, archly, feeling the big man difficult, "are known in history partly through their feminine predilections. You should not be an exception, senator."

"Were I a great man," said McMahon, thoughtfully, "that defect would certainly not have to be recorded."

The crowds were pushing by them, and Evelyn felt it a little irksome to make conversation with a man who stared critically at her.

"Have you, then, so thoroughly tested yourself against the fair sex?"

"Long since. The process was not exhausting."

He smiled upon her, half-amused, and Evelyn looked demure.

"How do you account for the others—poor Napoleon and the rest?" she asked.

"From the fact that most men have in them a trace of the feminine which responds to its kind."

"And you?"

"There is nothing feminine about me."

"I should say not," said Evelyn, laughing; "you're a big lion! Will you take me into the conservatory?"

The senator, who was enjoying the discomfiture that she was experiencing through his calm criticism of her, replied, a little teasingly:

"You do not need the conservatory to enhance your charms."

She flushed. "You think that was my intention?"

"I do."

"And if I deny it?"

"I should know the intention was possibly unconscious."

"Do you think my charms need enhancing?" she asked.

The senator laughed. "I certainly do not."

"Then why should I feel such a necessity?"

"Shall I tell you?"

"Yes, do."

"The beautiful Mrs. Stanhope," said McMahon, with a gentle inflection in his musical voice, "enter-

tained, possibly, for the first time in her life a feeling of insecurity."

"Against what?"

"Myself."

"And Senator McMahon flatters himself!" she retorted.

"It was you, madame, who gave me the opportunity."

"Do you mean," asked Evelyn, with great deliberation, "that I fear I may not be able to shake your prejudice against my sex?"

"No, for I have none."

"What, then?" The exquisite face was still flushed, and her eyes were flashing.

McMahon studied her a while, and then replied, irritably: "That you could not immediately charm me."

He saw the burst of temper that accompanied her laugh as she tossed her head, and it pleased him. She was a superb creature, spoiled by flattery but still natural.

"I am not in the habit," she said, the flush leaving her face, "of having my motives dissected!"

"Or of dissecting them?" he asked.

"No, nor that either! But shall we not at least sit down and be comfortable?"

"I am perfectly comfortable, as it is; but, if you are not, we can sit down, or do what you like."

"You are content, then, not to desert me?" she asked, mentally retracting the question.

"Desertion, madame, implies reproach."

"There is really," she continued, as they seated themselves on a divan, "something grotesque in your talking to a woman at all."

"I appreciate the additional flattery," answered the senator, smiling.

"Flattery!" gasped Evelyn, feeling at a disadvantage. "I!"

"Certainly," said McMahon, "and very charming flattery."

"I have found men," said Evelyn, recovering herself, "so stupid that flattery was unnecessary."

"Unless a man has wearied you or incited your anger, whatever you say or do in his presence is flattery,"

persisted McMahon. His grave eyes, still holding a half-amused expression, were in hers, and Evelyn felt her own close suddenly.

"You flatter," continued McMahon, "because it is the easiest way to put on the blinders. You must pardon me that I cannot allow you to put blinders on me. You are so interesting that I wish to look well at you. It seems to me that you may possibly represent a type of woman whom I have faithfully hunted and failed to find in society."

"And what is that? I trust not a monstrosity!"

"No, far from it," replied the senator, earnestly. "I mean a creature unspoiled by conventionalities, and in whom the natural instincts have not been entirely vanquished."

"You are alone in your opinion," sneered Evelyn; "no one entertains such impressions of me."

"What do you think?"

"I? Oh, I never think."

"I suppose not," he replied.

"You speak as though I were not capable of thinking," she flashed, disconcerted.

"It is not very important that you should be."

"You are complimentary!"

"I am, for my words imply that you may be worthy to have some one think for you."

"You believe, then, in woman being a nonentity?" she asked, petulantly.

"I believe in her being an important factor in a man's life," said McMahon, thinking of his own.

"And what should he be in her life?"

"A master," he replied, simply.

"And my opinions are just the reverse of yours! I think men are fit only to be the slaves of women."

He was silent.

"Well?" she exclaimed.

"A woman never speaks except from personal experience. That has, I suppose, been yours."

Another silence followed. She broke the awkward pause as the strains of a waltz reached them. "I suppose you never dance?" she asked.



The ex-senator looked surprised. "I? Never."

Evelyn, still feeling that the conversation rested upon her, laughed and drew down a spray of flowers that draped the window above them, and looked at him from beneath it while she thought of what to say.

McMahon gazed at her. "I suppose," he said, "you do such things from force of habit?"

She made no reply, but dropped the branch irritably and turned her back. Then she felt those two deep, half-amused eyes on her bare shoulders, and turned quickly.

"I may as well tell you," she burst forth, "that I detest men as you detest women."

"But I do not detest women." He arose and looked down upon her, and Evelyn, glancing up at the powerful form, felt her weapons fall from her. Her beauty had made no impression upon this man. It hung upon her painfully for a moment, and she sat abashed.

"It has given me great pleasure to meet you, Mrs. Stanhope," McMahon said, "and I trust that I may have the pleasure again." Then he turned and left her.

Evelyn made no response, and for an instant angry tears flashed to her eyes as she watched him make his way through the crowd, and vanish from her sight.

As she arose to her feet and looked about her, she was surrounded by men who had been awaiting the opportunity of being near enough to feed on her beauty.

She walked through them with a flashing glance and the movement of a tigress, straight up to Arnold, who had been seated a few feet away during her entire conversation with McMahon, with his eyes fixed upon her.

He arose. "How do you like him?" he asked, eagerly. "What do you think of him?"

"Think! I think he is a monster! Go and order my carriage. I am sick of all this!"

"You have found him difficult?" said Arnold. "Women always do!"

"I have found him insolent," snapped Evelyn, "insolent! And an actor—an actor who thinks he can fool me! Ha! what do you think his pose is—that great, enormous animal? Indifference to women! I wish I thought so," she added, under her breath; "it would be worth while! Go and order the carriage quickly, and get your own things. You may take me home."

When they were in the carriage, she took up the subject again with avidity.

"I wish I thought so. He!" She laughed heartily.

"What?" said Arnold, feasting his eyes on her face as they passed a street-lamp.

"What? That it wasn't a pose; that he was indifferent to women! What *else* do you suppose he said?" turning and looking at him. "That it was not a matter of any importance whether a woman ever did any thinking or not!"

"Some men hold such views," said Arnold.

"And I tell you," she exclaimed, "it is a pose!"

"Well, why should you care?"

"Care! Because I wish it were not. I wish it were so!"

"That you might teach him another lesson?" Arnold asked, absently.

"I? What do I care for the ponderous high-priest?"

"He seems to have interested you," suggested Arnold.

"Interested! Disgusted, rather! 'Woman is a factor'! I suppose he thinks that very fine. Why, he hasn't the first conception of what a woman is! Don't you suppose, Arnold, that I know what a woman is? I! I!"

She thrust her face close to his, and repeated, a third time, "I!"

Arnold said nothing, and she struck him against the chest.

"Why don't you speak? Have you suddenly become dumb?"

"I was looking at you."

"Nonsense! Answer me! Don't you suppose that I know what a woman is and what she can do? Don't you suppose I know what men are?"

Don't I know what you are?—you are a fine specimen, and they're all like you, just like you!"

"Possibly not," said Arnold, indifferently. He did not care much, since he was with her.

"And that name of his! Did you ever hear anything so absurd? Patrick McMahon!" She threw her head back and laughed again. "Patrick!" she repeated. Then she leaned forward and looked out. "What are we stopping here for?"

"The snow," said Arnold; "the men are at work; the carts have made a block-up."

"Stupids!" she exclaimed.

"Poor devils!" Arnold muttered, glancing out at the half-frozen men who were working, partially lost in the big mound.

When they moved on, Evelyn, who had been thinking, began talking again.

"Arnold!" she exclaimed.

"Yes?"

"When we get home, I'm going to let you go in for a moment, and when we're inside the warm room, I want you to take me in your arms and kiss me—kiss me with all your soul. I'm a strange creature. I have lived on myself and my own beauty; it has intoxicated me; it has been enough! Men's kisses! The very thought has revolted me, but I want to be kissed to-night; it's perfectly impersonal—know that. But I want to be kissed, and you happen to be here!"

Arnold's face was as white as death. He caught her to him. "Why not now?"

"No!" and she freed herself. "There, after we are warm—there in the soft light—be quiet now; not another word. I wish to think."

They reached her home, and Arnold followed her in. A few moments later, when, half-stupefied, he had left her, Evelyn walked straight up to a full-length mirror. Dropping the long cloak that still enveloped her, she turned a flood of yellow light upon herself.

"Now," she said, "I have learned the secret, and, Mr. Patrick McMahon,

we shall see! It was you I kissed—you! But what is this? My head swims, my knees are weak!" She peered at herself. "I am white—white as a ghost—and yet I am strong—I could walk a million miles—I *am* walking, but I have lost my way!" She staggered to a divan, and, falling down, burst into tears. Then she sprang to her feet. "I loathe you!" she cried, "I loathe you! I could bury my teeth in your flesh and tear my own! I am demented—mad—but I never lie! I would like to crawl to those great feet of yours, and lie crouched there like a beaten cur—just lie there! Instead"—she again walked up to the mirror, and examined herself resplendent in her first passion—"you shall crawl to mine!"

The senator was at that moment thinking tenderly of his father and of the magnificent line of ancestry to be perpetuated through Evelyn Stanhope.

### III

It was ladies' day at the club. The entire place was crowded. People crawled up and down the steps of the hall like ants. Laughter sounded, and voices, subdued or high-pitched, fell, wave-like, upon the close atmosphere. Movement and muffled sound were unceasing.

Through the confusion Evelyn glided like a firefly among a swarm of gnats. There was restlessness in her; she roamed aimlessly about from one room to the other, suggesting a caged animal that finds the heat unbearable. If she ascended the stairs, she descended immediately; if she seated herself on a divan, she arose and took a chair, or walked over to a window and looked out. The people who addressed her received curt replies or a direct rebuff. She wasn't thinking of them. Arnold came up to her, but when he had looked in her face, he turned and walked away.

He stood apart and gazed at her, trying to reason his love for her out of his heart; but that one kiss had ren-

dered him incapable of reasoning about her. He now recalled that she had confessed in the beginning that it was a way of using him. Using him! His eyes lighted up with the thought as his mind flashed back over his imperious childhood and all his proud life until he met her. Since then he had been a slave. Hatred of her permeated him, hatred that died as suddenly as it came, and left him staring at her, stupidly. A few minutes later, she passed by him, and he caught the fragrance of the perfume he knew, and immediately it seemed converted into a mist through which he looked into the future and saw his end. She returned and called him to her, and they sat down side by side.

"What were you thinking of?" she asked, looking impatiently at him.

"You."

"You persist in being stupid, then?"

"I am not stupid," he burst forth, as his hand covered hers with a sharp grip. "I have done unusual things for a man of my age—things that have been recognized, but it's over—I'm a doomed man!"

"What do you mean by doomed?"

"I don't know—it's over with me."

"Bah!" she flung at him.

They sat silent a while, both thinking, and then he asked, "Has any other man ever kissed you like that?"

"No, if that is any satisfaction to you—not one!"

She had released her hand, but he grasped it again. "You are speaking the truth?"

"You know," she returned, impatiently, "that I always speak the truth. Why do you put absurd questions to me?"

"I don't know," he replied.

She turned and looked at him, and through some power he held her eyes. They were two brilliant lights blazing in a gold-colored chalice, and he recognized a pain in them.

"I know why you are here to-day," he said, calmly.

"Possibly."

"I should think you would be tired," he added.

"Tired?"

"Yes, tired. The hunter of bears even gets tired, why not you, eternally pursuing men!"

"I am tired; I hate them!"

"Then why do you persist?"

"That," said Evelyn, stripping off one glove, "is really what puzzles me. I suppose it's the excitement. It is exciting, because my eyes are silent revolvers that never miss the mark!" They flashed.

"And the stricken ones, like me," said Arnold, "do they awake in you no moral revulsion for yourself?"

"You are forever attempting to dig out something in me, Arnold, that doesn't exist. The whole of me is revealed to you. I am nothing but this palpitating body that you see. Will you never believe it? I am neither moral nor immoral, and am no more interested in the morals of the world than a bird is! Why don't you recognize that? It might cure you of this—this love!" She glanced at him. "How old you are growing!" she said, as though surprised.

"Yes," said Arnold, sadly, "I am. If I died to-night, I should have possibly fulfilled my legitimate time here."

"Died!" Evelyn exclaimed, rising and moving off. "What nonsense! You are blue because you are foolish," she added, looking over her shoulder.

When she had walked a few steps, she saw McMahon entering, and stopped short. As soon as he was inside the door, he was arrested by a group of women, and she half stamped one foot in a wave of jealous anger. Then, a smile which was an imperious sneer crossed her features.

A man was passing with an ice in his hand. He caught her eye. "You are smiling at us, Mrs. Stanhope," he said, "all of us? You think us ridiculous, don't you, especially me, trailing through this crowd with a saucer in my hand?"

"No," said Evelyn, "I was sneering at myself."

The man laughed heartily. "You don't expect me to believe that—you whose life is a succession of conquests?"

"Conquests!" she returned, disdainfully; "conquests of what?"

"'Tis true—poor, good-for-nothing fellows like myself. You know how you used me!"

"Such conquests might cause the sneer," said Evelyn.

"You think that?"

"Yes; why not?"

"It doesn't sound like you, that is all—at any rate, not like our last conversation."

"When was that?"

"About six months ago, I believe."

"And the world," said Evelyn, "was made in six days! In six months the views of the whole world could be changed!"

"Can it be possible," said the man, putting his saucer on a table and staring at her, "that anything has changed you?"

"It is possible, yes."

"It could be only a man then—a——"

"You will carry some one a melted ice," returned Evelyn, sharply.

He walked off, and Evelyn fixed her gaze on McMahon, who was talking with apparent interest to the women gathered about him. He had just raised a forefinger in gentle rebuke when he caught Evelyn's eyes upon him. He recognized her by a glance, but went on talking. Evelyn breathed quickly, and turned away and seated herself with her back to him.

"There's Evelyn Stanhope," said a pale, graceful, light-haired woman in violet velvet; "I wonder what she is doing here?"

"What we all are, I suppose," returned her companion, indifferently.

"I know; but she isn't in the habit of being at functions and things of that sort."

"And why?" said the other, vaguely.

"Oh, she's different!" But, as Evelyn turned her eyes in their direction, she threw up her hands. "I know now; she used to have that look in her eyes when she went rabbit-hunting!"

Her companion laughed. "What do you mean?"

"A man, of course! It's never anything, when she starts out, but a man."

"She's a relative of yours, isn't she?"

"Yes, a distant cousin, but I know her very well. I used to stay a great deal at her grandfather's house when she was a child. Both of her parents were dead, and the old man, a terrible creature, amused himself by teaching her to swear and other barbarous things!"

"Why, how perfectly shocking!" exclaimed Fanny's friend.

"Yes, but true, nevertheless; and the results were not the best. She has always been a high-spirited, beautiful creature, but with absolutely no heart. They were poor after the war—she's Southern, you know—lost everything but the big house they lived in. She had to content herself with calico in those days. But she found a way. When she couldn't get clothes, she dressed up in leaves and flowers. I've seen her spend a whole day making wreaths and garlands to deck herself in. She's never been anything but a wild thing."

"She's certainly beautiful!" said her companion, eying Evelyn critically.

"Beautiful! Yes, of course, she's beautiful, but impossible, especially to women, and I believe she cares for the men only because they let her make fools of them!"

"She is marvelously dressed. How did she get her money?"

"Oh, she was determined to have it, ever since she was a baby. So, after her grandfather died, when old Stanhope went down to buy the farm and turn it into a hunting lodge, or worse, she made a fool of him and married him! The old man was nearly eighty, and his daughters wanted to tear her to pieces, but she carried her point. Fortunately for her, he died one hour after the ceremony, while the reception was going on."

"That was good luck with a vengeance!" laughed Catherine. "She must be awfully rich!"

"Oh, no, not rich; they went to

law and got a good deal, but she came in for the up-town house and enough to buy jewelry and gowns and keep the establishment going. I heard that, when one of the daughters went there and saw how she had fixed over things, she wanted to have her put in the insane asylum; and, really, you couldn't blame her. You feel, when you go there, as if you had walked into a furnished cave that the devil's imps have set on fire. It's lurid and strange, and yet you can't say it's in bad taste—it's simply different. And she's different—beautiful, as you say—but, somehow, she repels me, in a way."

"Do you see much of her?"

"Oh, yes, as much as any one, I suppose. I'm the only relative she has here. Would you like to go there?"

"I think I should—really."

"Then, I'll take you some day. Why, how do you do, Colonel Freeman! Catherine—but of course, you know Colonel Freeman. Can you squeeze between us, colonel?"

The colonel could squeeze between them, and Fanny at once recalled the last ladies' day and what fun they had had at luncheon.

Evelyn happened to hear this, as Fanny's voice was raised, and looked away in disgust. The majority of women, when it came to a question of eating, were respectable beggars.

McMahon was still listening to the party of women, and giving grave answers. A waiter passed Evelyn, and she stopped him. "Do you know Mr. McMahon?" she asked, a trifle nervously.

"Yes, madame."

"Go and send him here—say Mrs. Stanhope."

"Yes, madame."

Then she felt her cheeks flush, and half rose to recall the waiter, but he had reached McMahon and was giving the message. The senator looked over, as did also the others, but he excused himself and approached her.

"Have you been waiting long?" he asked her.

"I have," she replied; "I've been enjoying the novelty of being on time for an appointment."

"I," he said, in return, "of not being on time."

"Perhaps I interrupted you," she remarked, glancing toward the group of women still talking at the door.

"How?"

She nodded. "Those women over there."

"Oh, I was only on my way to you."

"One would never have supposed so."

"It cannot be possible," said McMahon, regarding her, "that Mrs. Stanhope ever depreciates her own charms by considering the influence of other women's?"

"Certainly," said Evelyn, not going into this, "you were not hurrying."

"I never hurry."

"Not even to me?" Evelyn did not recognize herself in this attempt to be coy, and it irritated her. She laughed, as though flinging away from her something disagreeable.

"What a strange being you are!" she exclaimed, scanning him with a puzzled air.

"I would rather you said unusual," returned the senator, indulgently.

"And you rejoice in it?"

"I rejoice in myself—yes! It is the duty of man to do so; at any rate, my people have so considered it." He had given vent to his own weakness.

"Your people?" said Evelyn, vaguely.

"Yes," said McMahon, and his mind went proudly back to them. His people of high courage and honor, his ancestors of that iron will which had made itself felt at Fontenoy, which had caused an uncle to be made a duke on the field of battle, and which had impressed its image on all of its progeny. He, the last product, was a plain American, but before him was a Spanish grandee, a stern field marshal, a soldier of fortune and a cardinal.

"I rejoice in everything," he said breaking silence, "that persists, de-



velops and perfects itself. I walked five miles before I came here, first, across the Park, then down Riverside. Man was the only thing I observed that didn't do these things. What a pitiable creature, Mrs. Stanhope, this lord of creation is, after all. With his vaunted progress, how much has he really progressed in two thousand years? The animals haven't lost their beauty, at any rate; most men have done that."

"The subject doesn't interest me."

"What, *man*?" asked the senator.

"No," answered Evelyn, "I detest them!"

"My! my!" said the big man, protestingly.

"That is," she relented, "unless they amuse me."

"Oh!"

"Why don't *you* make the effort?"

"To amuse you? Oh, I couldn't do that! I am anything but amusing!"

"They did other things," persisted Evelyn, feeling at a loss.

"Yes?"

"They admired me!" And then she knew she had floundered.

"Oh, *all* of them?"

"Yes, *all* of them—every one!" She had to keep on.

"And they were *men*?"

"Certainly they were men!"

"*Real* men?" That amused look that she abhorred was lingering in his eyes, and hers were moist above crimson cheeks.

"Yes!"

"Then you should be satisfied."

"But it has to be going on all the time!"

"Oh, it does?"

"Why should you be different?" she burst forth, boldly looking at him; and McMahon laughed.

"My dear madame, I admire you!"

"Admire!" she sneered.

"Well, you said admire."

"Let us change the subject."

"Very well."

One of those pauses that she also detested made itself felt.

Evelyn admitted to herself that she was feeling uncomfortable. Having

failed to impress McMahon by her beauty she had plunged into bold words concerning her own importance, which he had accepted as the prattle of a child. Her effort toward making him understand how she expected him to be impressed had proved a dismal failure.

"I wonder," said McMahon, breaking the pause, "if you really know what admiration of a woman is. Can you define it?"

"No, I don't like defining. All the pleasure goes when you dive into things."

"What do you like?"

"The present hour—the present moment! The past—no! the future—no! but now!"

"No matter what it holds?"

"No matter what it holds. I can enjoy a burnt finger. I can't tell you why, but I can. If a thing is pleasant, I like it, if it hurts, I like it!" As she spoke, she looked at him defiantly, and he knew that she was fortifying herself. It amused him.

"You are brave," he said, and felt touched in spite of himself at the unequal game. Then, "Why do you suppose," he asked her, "that all those men, as you expressed it, have admired you?"

"I have told you I don't go into reasons, but if you were more complimentary it would not be necessary to ask. For myself, I don't care to know."

"And perhaps you are right, because, in this case, if you did, you would recognize that they were creatures who had undergone suspension of their intellectual mechanism. I wish you could comprehend the meaning of their admiration. It might inspire you to dream beyond it."

"Of what?"

"Your own destiny—purpose."

"I don't care about it," she said, petulantly.

The senator looked away from her into the crowd about them, and said, quietly: "Women who destroy men should dream of making it up. And these beings," he added, quickly,

"who have admired you, what has become of them?"

"I don't know—and I don't care."

"Exactly. It is astonishing—I mean human beings are. What you really meant to tell me, though, was that all these men have adored you."

"Yes," she answered, vehemently, "adored me!"

They were interrupted, and later he began again.

"What I want to explain to you is, that you have never had adorers—never even been loved! You have simply been followed by a hungry mob that you both consciously and unconsciously fed—beings of no individuality or comprehension of individual rights, beings dominated by all things but themselves, by events, opinions, men, they knew not why. You have reveled in the mutterings of an army of lunatics who never even saw you, and you imagine that you have been adored! It is amusing, for neither you nor they know what adoration is. If you ever find out you will understand what I mean."

Evelyn felt repulsion, yet fascination, for this grave man who calmly ridiculed her, and made light of the important affairs of her past existence. Her brain was at work for something to hurl at him in return—something that would uproot him, as it were, and make him a victim of the very powers in her that he calmly denied. She sat like a cat trying to charm a bird, staring, with her chin slightly extended. It was she, however, who was charmed. Every tone of his voice penetrated her nerves, his great presence, in spite of her resistance, subdued her. In her eyes, his power rested on him like a mantle. One moment she revered it, the next she longed to tear it from him and trample it under her feet. Silence fell between them, and the conversation and movement around them were like the swishing of cymbals in her excited ears. He looked over her head through a window, but her gaze never shifted from his face. She was taking in all the powerful outlines softened alone by the grave sweetness

of the chiseled lips that lay peacefully together with apparently no more thirst for passion than the high-priest with his eyes on the sacrifice.

"Go on speaking again," she said, presently, her voice a husky whisper.

He withdrew his gaze from the window, and looked at her.

"No," he replied; "it is growing late; we must go into the dining-room."

He arose, and Evelyn followed him, ever searching the deepest recesses of her brain as to how to subdue him. She felt, nevertheless, that she was following him like a blindfolded child with its arms outstretched. It satisfied her when she looked down to see them hanging listlessly by her side. But she feared—feared being overtaken by some great weakness that would throw her headlong at this man's feet—indifferent of consequences. Her eyes were excited, her knees felt weak, and alternately her cheeks paled or flushed. With her eyes fixed on that broad back, it seemed to her that she could put out her hands and touch a moving world, strangely but magnificently peopled, which a lifetime of study on her part could not comprehend or vanquish. When they reached the dining-room and he turned, taking up their subject again with the same calm gravity, she felt alarmed and in terror of the thoughts that her mind had dared.

"What a house-cleaning it would be," he said, as the people jostled them, "to get rid of the duplicates—the useless duplicates that encumber. Duplicates make the crowds. Just see how alike all these men seem, and see how ravenously they are devouring the foods! Permit me to congratulate you upon your many conquests of such." A few moments later he was intently examining the label on a bottle of wine.

Fanny, whose luncheon was about over, and who was leaving the room, stopped and said a few words to Evelyn.

"I do believe she will land him," she afterward remarked to Catherine.

"You don't suppose——?"



"Well, why not?"

But Catherine could see that the thought ruffled Fanny, and so she added, "And all those millions?"

"They will have to go along," returned Fanny, dismally, "but, at any rate, the salad was good."

"I am glad they have gone," said Evelyn, as she watched the retreating figures of Fanny and Catherine.

McMahon was considering the possibilities of Evelyn's jealousy. It was not the first time that he had seen her eyes flash at the mere presence in his vicinity of a pretty woman, and he fully understood the unreasonableness of a nature like hers aroused by jealousy. It was the one thing in her that he most feared; it was the one difficult thing that he had to cope with. His lips were tightly compressed as he sat thinking; and his eyes had a gloomy expression that clouded them. As Evelyn glanced at him, he held her for a moment with this look, and she never forgot it.

#### IV

McMAHON was a constant revelation to Evelyn. The magnificent style in which he lived extended beyond her imagination, and in imagination she was not lacking. She had dreamed of palaces all her life, but her visions of them dwindled into hovels compared to the one in which he lived. Here all the splendors of the ancients were revived and combined with the luxuriance of modern New York. Magnificence was his natural inheritance, pomp and ceremony inborn through ages of forefathers who had distinguished themselves in war or in the Roman Catholic Church. Enormous rooms, tapestried walls, heavy, hand-made furniture, rugs and draperies that represented a fortune, pictures that represented another, went to make up his home. Then there were music, incense, flowers, services of gold and an army of servants representing all the nations of the earth. And through all this splendor, the man

walked as simply as the beaver in its hut. There was no affectation, no striving after effect, only grandeur that he felt his due, all the things and people of the world, paying silent tribute to him.

As a rule, during the day this enormous house remained closed; at six o'clock each evening a carriage or two might be seen to stop before his door, or, possibly, a thoughtful priest might arrive on foot. The dinner-hour was to McMahon one of recreation, and he rarely dined alone; more rarely were women present. Men of learning, of the highest scholarship, statesmen, writers, poets, were there to discuss the interesting and important events of the day. No man was more fastidious about his associates than himself; no man more critical about the quality of whatever made up his whole being, whether it was food or wine or a feast of reason.

Twice a year his doors were opened to the many, when a grand reception was given; this he considered a part of his duty to society, but the next day it was as though nothing had occurred, and his life went on uninterruptedly. Thinking was the important occupation of his existence, and all subjects from psychology to the handling of strikes interested him.

There appeared to be, in Evelyn's mind, no limit to his wisdom, and this carried great weight with her. What astonished her most was his knowledge of little things. He had not only spoken to her concerning his opinion of the future life, and the advantages of his Church, of which every minutest point was considered, but he could tell her the life and habits of every flower she wore, and the history of every jewel. Nothing had escaped his investigation, and Evelyn looked curiously at this head in which so much was stored away. His presence was to her constantly a kind of surprised exaltation, and it was because he lighted the lamps of her brain, and awakened the spark long since half extinct in her soul. It was fluttering. As yet it was not, but she

felt the promise. Life with him was a great ceremony, every detail of vast importance, and thus while it awed, it transported her. There were moments when her own past life reminded her of that of a circus rider on a caparisoned horse whose servitors were the clowns or the ring-masters. McMahon's presence and the sound of his voice had made in a few short weeks a new world that she beheld in wonder.

On a certain evening in February, she attended one of his receptions. Certainly no goddess could have appeared more beautiful than she when she entered the rooms, clothed in some shimmering material the color of gold, that scintillated as she moved. All eyes immediately became riveted upon her.

In a few moments, McMahon, followed by two priests, approached her. She whose self-possession had been her chief endowment now really trembled and almost stretched out her arms in search of it. Having introduced the men, McMahon turned abruptly and left her; then she recovered herself, and her old ability with men returned.

The priests, who knew McMahon's intentions, were immediately pleased with her quick intelligence, abrupt and bold repartee. She charmed them with little effort, and she thought that she caught from McMahon a half-suppressed glance of approval as he passed a door. This caused her to increase her exertions, that the two men might speak well of her. She had but one thought—to please him, and it was a thought unattended by any consideration advantageous to her interest or future.

She was a wild, untrained being, in love for the first time, and that was the whole of it. When he came near her, she trembled; when he spoke, she listened; when out of his presence, she thought of *him*, not of what he was or what he possessed.

She was intensely curious about him and his past, and longed to know in what manner women had figured in it.

Adroitly she questioned any and every one who might in any way enlighten her. She learned that women had played their parts in his life, and the thought of these unknown beings filled her with a vague but keen jealousy. Once, in a moment of delirium, she wished that she had been of the number—those almost forgotten ones whom he had allowed to be nearer to him than herself. But never did she dare make any advance to him, and not once did she divine the intellectual control he was exerting or the fact that he was endeavoring to obliterate her past by an all-absorption in a new present that would eventually mold her for himself.

There was but one way to fit her to become his wife—an all-absorbing passion for himself that would enable him to do with her what he pleased. He watched her closely, but that she did not know. He saw all the passion of her warm, Southern nature aroused, and added or reduced the fuel at will. When he should have developed her into a reasonable woman, her rights would begin. The yielding of one point, the very shadow of any weakness toward her on his part, and her old, tyrannical self would leap to the front. He knew that. She knew it, also, and in spite of all she watched her chance.

His efforts to reveal himself to her were principally in the presence of others. Alone with her, he often maintained a grave, abstracted silence. When she supposed he must be thinking of the things she had heard him learnedly discuss, he was thinking of her. There were times when he exasperated her, and she would lie awake at night conceiving plans that would bring him to her feet—plans which instantly vanished when he came into her presence.

No real happiness had come into her life; it was as yet a kind of suspended anticipation. Sometimes she was embarrassed before him, as though all her inmost secrets were being dug out and examined, and sometimes, when he left her, she would burst into tears.

Once or twice the impulse to lift the strong, white hand lying on his knee and kiss it madly, caused her to arise abruptly and leave the room.

McMahon watched the strain on her as a physician does the patient he feels obliged to starve to make well and put in a condition to eat. There were times when he was sorry for her, but his sympathy was never stronger than his will. It was his will that he felt he must exert over her, for he knew that he was not as yet, and for all time, the only man. Often he detected her glances at men during her conversation with them, and he was not unmindful of the risk a man runs in marrying a woman of twenty-seven with the practices and vanities of a conscienceless coquette. He could overcome these things, as he had overcome all the obstacles of life, but not without serious and even prolonged effort. It was not time to leave the door of the cage open. It might never be time, but he believed the hour would come. The faith, however, was in himself, not in her.

Once or twice he hesitated. His home could no more be desecrated by a flirtatious wife than his Church by a profligate priest. There were serious things in life—grave dignities to be observed. But she was the only woman he had ever seen whom he believed to be worthy of perpetuating his race as he wished it to be perpetuated. She was, therefore, all important. Once fitted for her part in life, her existence would be thenceforth that of a queen, free from care, filled with brightness, of a queen who could appreciate his highest self and her own responsibilities.

Save for his coldness and reserve toward her there was no cause for complaint on her part. He entertained her magnificently and was constantly with her at her home, at his own when other guests were present, and at all the public places where society meets. Through him she was invited everywhere, and he never failed to escort her and pay such attentions as would, in the eyes of the world, cause him to ap-

pear a devoted admirer. This both tantalized and fascinated her. He introduced her to the brilliant men of his acquaintance. He wished her to find herself, as she did, equal to them all but himself. He saw her charm them for his benefit, and, when she hoped for his approval, drove home with her like a sphinx. Whether in or out of his presence, he was an everlasting study that piqued, tormented, charmed and stimulated. If, in the morning, a resentful questioning filled her mind, the pride of the evening, when she stood by his side while the world paid its homage to him, vanquished it.

McMahon objected to this necessity of playing a part, even as his nature rebelled when called upon to do so in the affairs of the world; but he had long since recognized that men are hampered by conventions, the ruler as well as the slave. He knew that while in his daily life it was possible for a man not to lie, yet maintain his self-respect, it was equally impossible to be his natural self—that he never could be as long as social conditions exist. Shakespeare had been right when he had styled the world a stage and the people merely players. The most that any man could do was to accept the rôle of a high part and refuse all others. This, he consoled himself, he did. That he felt the continued wearing of the iron mask uncomfortable, at times, was also true. He donned it, however, when he went among men, as he did his overcoat when he faced a storm. Both were necessary precautions.

Very late in the evening, he found Evelyn seated alone in a corner of the conservatory, almost concealed from sight by a large palm.

"Why have you hidden yourself?" he asked her, a trifle impatiently, as he took his seat beside her.

"I have been thinking," she replied, "wondering about you."

"What about me?"

"Why you continually invite me here, come to see me and spend so much of your time with me. I am sure I do not especially interest you."

"That is a mistake. You do interest me."

"In what way?"

"Because I see in you a being," said McMahon, "whose possibilities for usefulness in the world have not been entirely destroyed."

"Usefulness!" she laughed, scornfully; "I never expected to be reduced to that! At least, I have been considered ornamental."

"You are that, too, which goes without saying. It is your usefulness that both you and others have overlooked."

"For which," said Evelyn, throwing up her hands, "I may thank my stars!"

"Far from it! The majority of women have no usefulness, are of no earthly consequence, having been refined, as it were, to the point of enfeeblement. Some few, in whom the natural instinct is very strong, escape. I believe that perhaps you may be of the number; you should congratulate yourself. Your power over men is greatly due to it."

"I don't follow you," Evelyn replied, a little insolently.

"I suppose not."

After a silence, she said, curtly: "Why not explain?" She was tired—just a little; worn out by—she knew not what.

"If you wish it, I will. Frankly, it seems to me that you possess an ingenuous egotism, a kind of suppressed wildness, an intractableness of disposition—all the things, in fact, that resemble more nearly the female animal. These are the attributes that have attracted me, as well as all other men, to you. When they are entirely lost, woman ceases to enchant. Do you understand me?"

"Only partially," said Evelyn, "but you interest me."

"Well, to be more simple, in spite of your line of over-cultivated, indolent ancestry, you seem to be in many respects a natural woman, and that," said McMahon, bending over her, "is what the world is in need of."

"What?"

"Natural women."

Her eyes met his bravely as she answered, a little unsteadily: "The natural woman is not very charming, I should think. A wild Indian is a natural woman."

"She may not be charming in the velvety sense," he returned, and she felt that he was for the first time regarding her as a man who looks upon a beautiful woman, "but she fascinates and holds by the very lack of what is expected of her."

With his illuminated face close to her own, Evelyn felt herself losing her power to frame sentences, but she answered: "In spite of your oft-expressed indifference, you seem to have studied women very well."

"I study all things; I am not indifferent to anything. As a study, woman is more interesting than man, because infinitely more complex. Further than that, I have found her invariably disappointing. There is no subliminal self, no striving for the heroic, which is, after all, what makes the human being of interest beyond the animal. But," he continued, "properly controlled by man, woman can be marvelous if she has not been spoiled. As a rule"—he leaned back in his seat as he looked from her—"how they weary me!"

"And I," she asked, weakly, "I do not weary you?"

"No," said McMahon, relaxing as he glanced at her; "that is not among your faults."

"What are my faults?"

He laid his big hand heavily on her shoulder. "Temper, unreasonableness, jealousy—all the wild things that are to be subdued. How? Through your love for me!" He arose and stood before her. "I am asking you to be my wife."

Evelyn paled. "Since you make no pretense of loving me, why?"

"I shall tell you later."

"And if I refuse to marry for a reason that is withheld?" she asked; and he read her yearning for some expression of love from him.

"You will give yourself with no

thoughts of self. You have done so." Her eyes flashed, and she started.

"Men have prayed for a touch of my hand!" she said, faintly.

"You shall pray for a touch of mine, and that is as it should be. You say that men have loved you—I will teach you to love!"

He turned quickly and left her, and, a few moments later, a servant approached her with a glass of wine. She drank it eagerly, and, when McMahon returned, a slight color had risen to her cheeks.

They passed through the rooms in silence to the foot of the staircase, and, while she ascended and donned her wraps, he awaited her return. She looked lovely, with her head enveloped in the snowy stuff that fell to her feet, McMahon thought. She was gentle, too, but this did not delude him. He knew her perfectly. One momentary weakness on his part, as a man, and all the subdued flames would burst forth. He escorted her, uncovered, to her carriage, but with all the seriousness that baffled her, the seriousness of a priest.

"Good night," he said, in a low voice, with his hand on the door of the carriage; and she answered, "Good night."

As she drove off, Evelyn was surprised to see Arnold standing by the steps of the house, staring at her. Having denied herself to him of late, she knew that he had taken this means of simply seeing her, and it angered her. She wondered if McMahon had recognized him. She had done with her past, why should it dog her footsteps? She attempted to fling him, as it were, out of her mind, but there, directly opposite, were his wounded eyes staring at her, and she could do nothing but stare back.

Presently, she impatiently brushed one hand across her brow, and looked out of the window, but there they were, Arnold's eyes, outside the glass, still staring. Only when she reached home and entered familiar surroundings was she enabled to banish them. Then all things but the glorious triumph of the

moment slipped away. She knew how to grasp moments—to wring from them all the essences of joy they contained—and she used this one so. Through the blood-colored globes in the warm, hushed silence, she could hear these words vibrating slowly: "I am asking you to be my wife."

For a long while she sat still in her wraps, her elbows on her knees and her shining eyes fixed before her, thinking. Finally, she felt drowsy, and arose as one from a heavy sleep, moving about aimlessly. Then she rang for her maid, whom she had dismissed on her arrival, and said to her, "Angeline, put me to bed."

## V

WITH Evelyn, going to bed was a great ceremony. She could conceive, she often said, of nothing more delicious than the idea of sleep. She liked all things connected with the night, which had always seemed to her the sleep of the day, with its marvelous, mysterious dreams. To see the day grow drowsy, and draw its splendid curtain before its luminous bed, charmed her senses. It was thus that her imagination translated the setting sun's fantastic display. Day after day, from a certain window, she watched this great curtain unfold and reveal all its garish effects. It was the spectacular forerunner of the incomprehensible mystery that would come as well to her as the day-sleep. To others, many things might be paramount; to her, the gradual, oncoming gloom, in the stillness of which came perfect self-realization, to be followed by blissful, incomprehensible unconsciousness, was one of the supremest joys of existence.

Often, during the day, a vision of her large, fine bed, decorated in laces and silks of richest materials, and shining like gold, rose before her, made her listlessly languorous. Then she saw herself spread out, relaxed, content; no pains or aches were dreaded, for she had none; no qualms of conscience, for she had none.

She awoke the morning after the ball,



contented, as usual, opened her great eyes, lifted her arms, and looked about her. Then the remembrance of the night before came, and she lay still, gazing in a kind of rapture at the frescoed angels on a canopy above her bed. It seemed to her in her new joy that she was one of those beautiful creatures who had found life, and dropped down into this warm bed. Presently, she touched a button that flooded the room with a yellow light as of the newly risen sun, and, having sat up and feasted herself on her own image reflected in a mirror opposite the foot of the bed, she touched another button which brought her maid.

The girl entered with the morning papers in her hand, and some letters.

"Madame!" she exclaimed, a little breathless, and holding back the papers.

"Well?" asked Evelyn.

"Pardon!" said the girl; "but madame had better have her breakfast before she sees the papers!"

"Why," asked Evelyn, glancing at the girl's excited face, "what has happened?"

"Monsieur—" began the girl, and stopped.

"Well," said Evelyn sharply, thinking of McMahon, "what is it? Give me the papers at once!"

She was warm and fragrant and rarely beautiful in this moment, with the fine lace falling from her marble throat, and the wealth of silken hair framing her face, and making a shining mantle of gold around her shoulders. There was a sweet flush in her cheeks—the flush of the child freshly awakened, that paled to the marble tint of an anemic old woman as she glanced at the first sheet of one of the papers which she happened to open. In a moment, however, she collected herself, and, looking calmly at the girl, asked, "When did this happen?"

"Madame, it says at two o'clock!"

"Go!" said Evelyn.

"Will madame have her breakfast?"

"Certainly," snapped Evelyn. "Why not?"

"What does she say?" asked the servants below.

"Nothing," the girl answered; "she wants her breakfast!"

Then they all laughed. "But, my God," said the butler, finally, "the poor young man!"

"Bah!" retorted the maid, "what does she care? Cook a bird for her! She always eats if something happens!"

The aroma of the broiling bird soon filled the kitchen. The cook bustled about, while the other servants gossiped and finally listened to the butler, who read aloud the shocking details of the tragedy.

Up-stairs, Evelyn had not moved a muscle. She sat staring at the paper, white as the pillows at her back. Here was a great stupid, she was thinking, who had allowed himself to be killed, and here was she, side by side with him, gazing into the eyes of an enormous public as the leading figure of a sensational article that really, as it was put, amounted to a scandal. This thing to happen now—to-day, of all times! In this hour, when she was tremblingly holding her happiness in her hand, it might be snatched from her. McMahon, with his grave dignity, she felt, would be intolerant of such a thing. Would he wish such a woman for his wife? This was the time, of all others, when she wanted silence concerning herself, not notoriety! When he saw this, what would be the result—how would he take it?

"He!" she exclaimed. "Arnold, of all others, to get me into this trouble!"

Suddenly, a violent rage, born of fear, took possession of her. Her whole being convulsed, and language approaching the baby oaths taught her by her grandfather, escaped her lips. Oh, it was very wonderful to be dead! Yes; but what of her? She often envied the dead their secrets. Arnold was no doubt finding out many things, but he had left her here to face McMahon—that terrible being whom she adored, and who could crush her by a look. She sat

amazed and bewildered; as yet, not one thought of pity for the dead man had come to her. She merely thought what effect the act would have upon her life so far as McMahon was concerned. She was under the spell of a blind, unfeeling passion, when an army of dead men would have been to her no more than a lately-hewn forest. "He!" she whispered to herself; "what will he say?"

She said this over and over, while a violent storm, that had been gathering, suddenly burst and dashed against the window panes.

Fanny, with a dripping umbrella, rushed up the steps, unannounced, and entered the room breathlessly.

"Well!" she exclaimed.

"Well?" said Evelyn.

"Have you seen the papers?"

"Yes."

"And you know——?"

"That Arnold Venable has stupidly allowed himself to be shot? Yes."

"You regard it that way, then," Fanny burst forth, "—as stupidity?"

"Certainly; how else?"

"Evelyn, you're a heartless wretch!"

Evelyn shrugged her shoulders as the maid entered with her breakfast. "Put something on me," she said to the girl, who set down the tray, and brought out a white robe, embroidered with scarlet poppies. When Evelyn had taken her seat before her breakfast, she said to Fanny, who was still standing staring at her: "Sit down; but I hope you are not going to trouble me further about objectionable things in the morning papers."

"But *you* are there!" exclaimed Fanny.

"Well, suppose I am? It can't be helped, can it?"

"And this man was your friend!"

"You think so?" said Evelyn, curtly. "I don't! Will you have some breakfast?"

"No!"

"A cup of coffee?"

"No!"

Evelyn again lifted her shoulders, and Fanny, leaning forward and looking curiously into her face, asked:

"Evelyn, haven't you one particle of heart?"

"I don't know," said Evelyn, "but I do know that I have a temper, and, if it would do any good, I would like to kill Arnold all over again for getting me into this trouble."

"It's you," said Fanny, indignantly, "always you!"

"Yes," said Evelyn, "it's the same with everybody—it was the same with him."

"And you—don't even care?"

"How can one be always caring about what happens?" Evelyn answered, hastily, as she broke off the leg of the bird, and began eating. "I assure you, Fanny, that, while I begin the first thing in the morning and never stop till night—till I am asleep, in fact—I never get through with what I have actually to think of about myself."

"In all my life," said Fanny, "I never met a being like you."

"I suppose not," said Evelyn; "you had better have a cup of coffee."

"No; I am going. I came to you because I thought you were in trouble. I find that you can't be in trouble. Really, it is appalling, this heartlessness."

"So everybody says," answered Evelyn. "Arnold was always saying it; but do you think it quite polite to comment on it? If I had a humped back, would you speak of that?"

"No, I wouldn't, and you may be right; but, mark my words, your day will come—your day of reckoning!"

"If so," said Evelyn, "I hope to find it interesting."

"I hope you will," said Fanny, angrily, as she reached the door. "Good-bye."

"Good-bye," returned Evelyn; then, she pushed the tray from her, and began to think.

The rain had ceased, and the room was quiet, save for the ticking of a little Dresden clock. The maid had lighted a wood fire on the hearth, and the fitful blazes were playing upon Evelyn and about the room. She was thinking of what stand she would take, what position to keep McMahon from being



affected by this public scandal that had introduced his name. Suddenly, an idea occurred to her. She would at once become a Roman Catholic! That, she knew, in his eyes would make amends for much, and by engaging his interest in the subject she could divert him from this other. This seemed to her a brilliant thought, and it brought the color to her cheeks and lighted up her eyes. To become a Catholic in no way disturbed her peace of mind. In fact, the pomp and ceremony, lights, incense and splendor of it appealed to her as did all magnificence. McMahon had spoken to her on several occasions about her soul, which he said was drugged by the poisonous effluvia of the world in which she lived, and she had, in her turn, felt that the possible discovery and awakening of something within her that she had not yet explored would be interesting.

She rang for her maid, despatched a telegram, and two hours later McMahon was announced.

## VI

EVELYN descended to meet McMahon in a *négligée* costume of white, which she affected as suiting the occasion. There was a pearlish tint of pallor over her face, and, as she looked up into his eyes, he saw that two sharp lines had formed themselves darkly beneath her eyes. This touched him. He had never seen her before except in fashion's garb, and she appeared to him larger and softer and more feminine. Her form was unstayed, her hair carelessly arranged, and she was jewelless.

"Well," he said, "you sent for me?"

"Yes."

"What can I do for you?"

"I will tell you; be seated."

They sat down, and she began talking, excitedly. "This affair," she announced, "this stupid affair in the papers—you have read it?"

"Yes."

"And what did you think of it?"

"It did not occur to me to denominate it a stupid affair."

"Well, it was stupid. All tragedies are the result of somebody's stupidity." She harped on that. "Every tragedy is stupid."

"Possibly," said McMahon.

"You don't believe any of those horrid innuendoes?"

"No."

"But I suppose it all shocked you?"

He made no reply, and during the silence she tapped her foot. Finally, he asked:

"How did it affect you?"

"Me? It made me angry!"

"And your friend's death?" inquired McMahon.

"Made no impression upon me. The death of people," she went on, "never does. I am only curious to know what is revealed to them after they die. I have always been curious about that. I am different from other people. I never miss any one; neither loves nor sorrows touch me. But this touched me, because it made me afraid—afraid on account of *you*. For myself, I do not care. I have never feared anything before"—she laughed, nervously—"except the dark! Once, I feared that, for in it I saw terrible things—monsters, red lights, tumbling mountains of fire that might fall on me, and oceans all ablaze that might roll over me, but I got over it when I learned that those things were in my brain and not in the dark at all; when I learned that I could shut my eyes in the light and see them, too."

McMahon said nothing. He saw that she was terribly excited and that all this was her way of gaining time and getting her composure; that this thing had affected her, been a horrible shock to her, he also knew full well, but that, childlike, she would not admit it. He simply looked at her calmly as she went on.

"I have had no fear of the living or the dead," she rang out. "I have always hated people who were afraid, no matter what happened; but when this came, and I thought what you would think—" She broke off, and looked at him.

"Well?"

"I knew fear, and it was terrible! It clutched at my heart, and drew the life from every nerve in my body, until I was for a few moments like a block of ice. It was in that moment that I sent for you. I wanted to tell you this—that I would do anything under heaven you wished me to do if you would ignore it. Will you? I *will* do anything! I'll commence my preparation for your church!" McMahon's eyelids raised quickly. "I'll let you bring that great monsignor to see me to convince me and teach me. I'll say my prayers to the Virgin, and I'll confess everything to the priest, *everything* I ever did or ever thought or felt since I was a child. At first, I shouldn't know how, for my sins have been negative ones—those of a heartless woman, not a weak one; but I am not afraid, and I could tell the others just as well if they had existed. I have always been called a strange creature," she went on, "without any heart. It may be true. I don't know. Why should I question God about myself?" she flung at him, fiercely. "He made me, not I! I never loved anybody or cared for things. Nothing that happened made any impression on me. I've always been taken up with *myself*. As a child, I was thrown on my own resources. I used to stay away hours in the woods—once I stayed all night to see the stars disappear. I wanted to see how they went. No one noticed—no one cared. My mother died when I was born, and my father soon after. Then, I lived with my grandfather, and for his amusement he taught me to be a bad child. The more daring I was, the better he liked it. He made me swear and ride a horse bare-back, and whip the little negro children who were afraid of me, simply to amuse himself! Some little white Southern children, as well as black ones, in those days after the war when I was born, were savages. I was one!"

McMahon was looking straight at her, and it seemed to her that he was reading all her thoughts—that talking was unnecessary; but she went on:

"When I was twelve years old, I dis-

covered that I was beautiful, and even at that early age it pleased me to attract the attention of men simply by my glance. It interested me to do this, and then I tortured them. I have always kept that up. You see, I want you to know me as I am!"

She paused, but he still remained silent.

"I've never had much respect for people—men even less than women! You don't respect a dog that whines and crouches and begs at your feet, do you? So how could I respect these men who acted that way, and they all did, every one, until you——"

She was talking rapidly and violently, with her head thrown back, her chest extended, and her hands hanging limp beside her. McMahon leaned back, folded his arms over his chest, and still looked at her. "Well?" he asked, slightly closing his lips.

"Well, that was a new beginning! All my life I had been dreaming of a man who would not succumb to me." She clasped her hands before her, and her eyes flashed as she went on:

"I cannot tell you what joy I experienced that first night when you would not yield an iota to me! And that joy that buried itself deep in me has grown until my whole being is consumed by it, and there are times when I feel myself a luminous creature, glowing and shining. You have awakened something in me that is on fire, and always, night and day, day and night, you are before me, kindling anew that fire. I love you! You have been to me like a frozen ocean, but I love you! Why, why, why, I don't know! Tell me that this is nothing to you, this stupid thing! Tell me quickly! What are murders, deaths, scandals and those things that go on every day—must go on—by the side of my love?"

Suddenly, looking straight into his face, she burst into tears, and then, throwing herself across his knees, she lay with her head between her limp, hanging arms, sobbing.

McMahon allowed her to expend this

first excitement, and then raised her, gently.

"Evelyn," he said, quietly, "I have not condemned you. Why do you take so much for granted?"

"Because I have not seen how it was possible for one like you to overlook it. You care about things—how they look and what is said! You think of your church and all those priests and the whole world, but I care for nothing!" She laughed hysterically, and threw up her hands. "Do you know what they say? That I am interested in you because of what you are, what you have done, what you possess! Ah!"—she stretched forth her arms and stared beyond her—"I wish the whole world were a barren wilderness with a wild wind blowing, and you and I standing facing it, bereft of everything but ourselves. That is how I love you! Do you understand now?"

She paused, and McMahon, after contemplating her, said, quietly:

"My child, what you have described is not love at all, but the passion of a savage."

"You planted it in me!"

"And any other man of my physical strength and self-control could have done the same. Monsignor Capello, whom I shall send to you to-morrow, will talk to you on this subject, as well as many others. He is the most distinguished, as well as the most remarkable, man we have in the church, and he, far better than I, can awaken within you the divine voice that was stifled in early childhood by circumstances, and later kept smothered by the vulgar materialism of your existence."

"I could find it better through *you*!" she exclaimed.

"Ah, no!" and he smiled at her; "you have told me what I inspire, but this man will temper that extravagance in you. He knows life so well that understanding and sympathy seem to exude from his person. It will not be necessary for him to argue with you, for he himself will be the argument, and you will not be able to resist an effort to merit his approval.

Evelyn, one has to learn what love is before experiencing it."

He stood up, as usual, and gazed down at her, and for a moment there was not a trace of the gentle, priest-like scholar which accorded with the grave eyes. They flashed upon her, and something lion-like sprang up in the man; but, when he spoke, he was quite himself, calm and collected.

"Your doubt of me to-day has not been a high compliment. Try to look upon me as your strength in the hour of any trouble, and your protector, not your accuser. I shall bring monsignor to-morrow at four o'clock to see you. And, now, go and rest. You have suffered very much, and the better part of that suffering is due to your distress over the death of your friend. Much of what you have said to me was a cloak for your real grief. You are not heartless. You are a child. Now, listen to me. Your grief is perfectly natural and proper, but it is as well to put it from you. Let this tragedy mark the climax of your past. Start forth on a new road. Just as many men must sometimes be destroyed in the molding of a nation, so sometimes must tragedies occur in the molding of a character. Be worthy of what has transpired in your development, and never doubt me again."

He turned and left her. She heard him stop a moment in the hall, and then leave the house. Gradually, she opened her eyes in quiet amazement. Her suffering, born of fear of him, had been groundless. He had passed it all by, nor had she even been censured. A great relief fell upon her. He knew her now, the best and the worst of her. Nothing was concealed when that quiet gaze rested upon her. He knew what no one else would ever have discovered, that she was torn and agonized over Arnold's death, that her heart was aching.

She ascended to her room, where she remained alone until late in the afternoon. Then she rang for her maid, had herself dressed, and ordered a cab. When it arrived, she descended

thoughtfully and was driven to the place where the papers said Arnold's body had been carried. She entered, and bent over the coffin.

"Arnold," she whispered, "he was right; I *have* suffered, suffered terribly. I suffered for that other poor one, but I wouldn't tell you, and I never intended that any one should know. I was always that way. When I was a little child, if they whipped me till the blood came, I wouldn't cry; they couldn't make me, and I never would say it hurt. But it did; oh, it did, and this hurts that same way."

She stayed for a long time, sometimes talking, sometimes silent, until finally two other women, Arnold's mother and sister, who had arrived, she supposed from a distance, came in weeping, and then she left.

When she entered the carriage and drove home, a melancholy indifference had settled upon her. What did it matter, since they were all some day to be dead, even as Arnold was—she, McMahon, the whole world that was alive to-day—all those people who were at this moment hurrying to the theatres and various places? How excited they all seemed, rushing so madly!

She looked up at the heavens, turbulent and excited, too, where ragged, black clouds were being torn apart by a restless wind, and where a few large stars glared at her fiercely.

She began to wonder what she would do with herself for the rest of the evening. At first, she thought that she would drive to Fanny's, and confess to her that she had been sorry and had lied, but she shrank from that. Fanny had never understood her.

She had eaten nothing since morning, and suddenly she was seized by ravenous hunger. Stopping her carriage at the Waldorf, she entered and took her seat at a table in a corner. Looking up from the menu, she discovered that McMahon was seated a few tables away from her, evidently the host of quite a party of friends at dinner. The party consisted of three men and four women. They were all

in evening dress, and the women seemed to Evelyn, suddenly inflamed by jealousy, particularly handsome and brilliant. She studied them intently while her heart beat violently. It both surprised and infuriated her that they were perfectly at ease with McMahon as she had never been. All the events of the afternoon drifted away as unreal, and she became in an instant her old, unheeding self. McMahon seemed an altogether different man from the one who, a few hours ago, had been talking to her of the church and wise men and the seriousness and sacredness of things. He was apparently a far younger person, and his manner might have been that of any other man giving a dinner. The unceasing merriment increased her astonishment. While she experienced burning jealousy of him, he seemed at the same time a perfect stranger to her, a being in whose life she took no part whatever. Her mind was confused, and her head was aching. She was glad when the soup came, and she bent over her plate, eating from it rather hurriedly, and absorbed in her thoughts. The two dinners thus progressed, hers tragically and in silence, theirs gaily enough.

She left before them, and just as she passed by their table a rather young and very pretty dark-haired woman, whose marked brows she noticed, laid her hand on McMahon's shoulder, and spoke to him in French. Evelyn observed quickly that his manner was indulgent and that he looked very tenderly into the woman's eyes. This fact, and also that she could not understand what the woman had said, filled her with such rage that it was with an effort she left the place without making a scene. McMahon, watching her, was conscious of this. In his anxiety, he had extended her no recognition; but, when she reached the hall, he was close upon her.

Without a word, he escorted her to her carriage, and put her in. Holding the door open, he said, sternly: "I do

not wish my future wife to be seen dining alone in a public restaurant."

This criticism, in her excited state, infuriated her. She turned, and struck him squarely in the face.

As McMahon went back to his guests, he realized more forcibly than ever that her jealousy would be the most difficult thing in her to conquer. He, however, had no fear, and smiled with a certain satisfaction as he recognized her feminine ferocity and all that it meant. He knew that the events of the day had left her scarcely herself.

## VII

In the morning, he was not surprised to receive a note from Evelyn containing an apology, and requesting him to come to her. To this, he despatched a reply telling her to give the affair of the previous evening no further thought, but to go to her was impossible, as he was busy preparing a speech for the evening.

Upon the receipt of this reply, Evelyn felt the time like lead upon her hands. She paced the house absently. She knew about this great political speech that he was to make; it had been heralded in the papers. She had had, for a long time, a great desire to see McMahon before the public in some important situation, and decided to go. Added to this was a feverish inclination simply to look upon him.

She thoroughly appreciated his generosity in forgiving her conduct of the evening before, but she had comprehended that he would overlook it, and had really been experiencing more discomfort over the effect of those self-possessed women on him; of them she was confessedly afraid. Snatches of their conversation buzzed in her ears—conversation which was not only brilliant and sparkling with wit, but in which serious subjects were intermingled lightly and with perfect ease. It had astonished her to discover that these women knew of such things, things that she had never considered,

and that they could, with the utmost self-possession, discuss them with McMahon.

She began in dismay to recall the fact that she had never discussed a subject in her life, never done anything, in short, but array herself in order that men might admire her. The environment that she had deliberately made for herself began to crush her. What did she, who had lived alone, self-sufficient within four walls, know of this world, and why had he asked her to be his wife? She pondered long over this, and over his life that seemed to extend far beyond her, embracing so much that it bewildered her. How was it possible for her to take a part, the part that would be required of her, in such a life?

The thought of her physical charms naturally flitted through her mind, but not pleasantly. She rejected them as something that had consumed higher things and left her, in a way, pauperized. The next moment, she recovered her vanity, and resented as an insult the women whom he seemed to have presented to her. These combined emotions unnerved her to a point that terrified her. She was afraid of falling into another temper, and felt keenly that she was a wild thing, uncontrolled, a barbarian, in fact, capable of any disastrous act if the occasion offered.

She had avoided positions in which her jealousy might be aroused, and it stood up before her now, a terrible monster that could at any moment get the better of her, and, if need be, annihilate her. Again she attempted to fortify herself by her beauty, and walked over and examined herself insolently in a mirror; but the feeling of insolence gave place to one of helplessness, and she dropped down in a chair, utterly tired out.

At eight o'clock, when she entered the immense hall that held thousands of people, it was already crowded. There was intense excitement in the air, and she swept to her seat like a spark borne forward by a gust of hot wind.



The lights were not yet turned on to the full, but she could see the faces of the audience plainly—faces of people who were chatting and animated, people in a state of breathless anticipation because a great orator was to address them.

The political situation of the day was chaotic, and the entire country had looked forward to McMahon's taking a part, at least, that some definite decisions might be arrived at, some point to work from, either for or against. In front of the stage, men were lined to take down his words, while others were waiting to have them telegraphed to all points of the continent. Evelyn realized for the first time the importance of a great man, and her eyes ached to look upon McMahon, who had not yet arrived. The stage itself was crowded, and men were leaning forward, eagerly discussing with one another the numerous exciting points of the hour. With her eyes fixed intently on the stage, that she might not miss the advent of his arrival, she heard distinctly a conversation going on at her back.

"Nonsense!" one man said to his neighbor; "what do these pledges amount to when he has made each man feel that the fate of the world is personally dependent on him? That's what he does—he makes them forget themselves, and carries them right along his own way. The next day, they may want to shoot themselves, but what of it?"

"Do you know what his present attitude is?"

"No one ever knows beforehand; but, whatever it is, things will go his way."

"The leaders of three factions are to be made unanimous," said the other, "and I would like to see him or any other man do it."

"You will see it," said his companion.

People were still crowding into the hall, and many were now standing around the walls. Evelyn glanced about her for a moment, enjoying the delicious thrill of the tribute paid to

the man who, though certainly not her lover, stood to her in a close attitude. The people, as she stared at them, faded away as individuals, and the whole assemblage became a black abyss in which their faces shone like rayless stars. Some round lights placed in the walls looked like pale moons.

Suddenly, the whole house flashed into illumination, and the burst of applause and the clapping of hands were like a terrible downpour of hail and rain. It continued without abatement, for it seemed to Evelyn an unconscionably long time while McMahon stood, tall and powerful, in the front of the centre of the stage. When he finally took his seat, the business of the evening began. Tiresome details excited arguments and one or two short speeches from lesser lights. Then a tall man with a long face arose, made a few inconsequential remarks, and finally announced that Senator McMahon would now address the audience.

Once more the furious applause burst forth, some energetic gallery gods gave vent to piercing whistles, and a few gave advice to McMahon as to what to do with all opposing influences.

When the noise subsided, the orator held his audience breathless by a moment of silence, and, when at last his voice fell upon their ears, all experienced relief, relaxed themselves, and settled into attitudes of more comfortable attention.

Evelyn felt under the spell of a new-born fascination. It was really the first time she had ever heard a powerful orator, or seen a man completely transformed by the expression of rare gifts. It seemed to her that McMahon was a dozen men in one; sometimes he appeared lean and attenuated, again even more gigantic than his real self. His eyes flashed, his lips curved into all expressions, from that of grave sweetness to sharp cynicism; his great arms, one moment like wheels grinding forth what he was saying ferociously, were the next extended as though to take the whole audience to his breast. His voice rose and fell caressingly, the next second cutting like a knife. For half an

hour, while he talked, one moment suggestively, another obscurely, but always holding his hearers, his real attitude in the situation was not defined. He was arriving at something, but what? They did not know, but instinctively each man began to feel a delightful sense of surrender which was really born of the magnetism the orator was pouring forth upon them.

Suddenly, a name burst from his lips—the name of a plain man, who had served one term in Congress and who had made for himself a reputation only for truthfulness and honor. In a flash, all was understood. The great man who had so often refused the nomination was now, when the country really needed him, when he alone could right the country, offering himself to them through another. This was plain to all, and in the midst of a sentence he was silenced by another tumultuous burst of applause.

The very building seemed to tremble, and Evelyn felt herself for a moment sick and faint from excitement. A dim comprehension that this man, before whom she had stood in diffidence and awe, was beloved of the people, that in their hearts was no fear, but the exaltation of patriotic adoration. She understood that she had regarded McMahon from one tiny side of himself, and the consciousness of his many sides and her own enlightenment concerning him, caused a broadening within herself that was, for the moment, overpowering. Breathless, she followed his speech to the end, filled with an understanding vague and mystical, as a light through colored globes, which had never been hers before. She felt that she could not leave until she had seen him in close proximity. So she stood at the entrance of the hall, waiting for him, while all the people passed out. When he appeared, a feeling of embarrassment instinctively overcame her, and she drew back and out of sight behind a tall man who was also waiting.

A new revelation awaited her. McMahon was breathing heavily, like a horse that has been run hard; two lines

of sweat streamed down the cheek nearest her, and the side of his throat, in which a vein was still swelled, was red up to the ear. She caught a glimpse of his eyes, which were on fire and slightly closed, as though to conceal themselves. He seemed to be making an effort, she thought, to gain control over himself and be restored to his usual calm.

It was the first comprehension that she had that what he had done was a tremendous effort, in which he had put his whole being, and expended, for the time, all his powers. This first physical expression made a great impression upon her. She had seen the man only as a rock, with every nerve under fine control. The thought that he would need rest and refreshment caused to spring up within her the womanly desire to be on hand to serve. She experienced, for the first time, that sympathy born of femininity, wherein the strong man is yet a child for whom she may care.

That was a happy moment for Evelyn. When she had seen him enter his carriage, she entered her own and had herself driven by his house. He had just entered. She knew this because the carriage was driving off, and because a light flashed up in one of the rooms. She put her head out of the window and looked back, filled with intense yearning.

## VIII

A BEAUTIFUL snow was falling the next day. Evelyn, who, with all the naturalness of a child, stood looking through the windows for McMahon, remembered that they used to call it "a wet snow"—a snow in which the flakes are abnormally large, and cling wherever they fall like white, frightened butterflies; the kind of snow which in a few short hours converts the whole world into a hushed, exquisite dream. Something of the gentleness of such a storm, combined with her exaltation of the night before, was within her, and her large, violet eyes looked out sweetly like purplish stars.



Her mood was instantly changed, however, as McMahon arrived, for, as the carriage drove away the pale-faced, dark-haired woman whom Evelyn recognized as the one who had laid her fingers on his arm and whispered to him in French, put out a white-gloved hand and waved him good-bye. This was too much! He could not even come to call on her without another woman driving to the door with him! She felt herself instantaneously bereft of all her resolutions of self-control, and, in spite of her violent effort at composure, when McMahon entered, he was greeted by a pair of darkening eyes that looked out at him from a face whiter than the banking snow. Her breast also was heaving, and her hands were clenched.

McMahon stepped forward rather quickly.

"What is the matter?" he asked. "Are you ill?"

"Ill!" she sneered, scarcely able to speak.

"You look ill," he continued, still gazing at her. "What has happened?"

"Can't you even come to see me without bringing her along?" she asked, bluntly. "Can't you leave her that long?"

"Who?"

"That woman!"

"Oh!" and McMahon laughed. "You are not jealous, I hope?"

"Why am I not jealous? Do I look like one of those milk-and-water beings who experience no jealousy?"

"No," said McMahon, still smiling, "you don't! But you wouldn't be jealous without cause, would you?"

"Cause!" flashed Evelyn. "How much more cause do you expect me to have? I did not know," she went on, in rapid derision, "that you were a man who must always be surrounded by women!"

"Nor must I."

"Who is she?"

"Who?"

"That creature that drove here with you—that French thing!"

"You must not call her names," said McMahon. "She is my guest!"

"Do you mean that she is staying at your house?"

"Yes."

"And she was there last night?"

"Yes; she has been there three or four days."

"But last night," Evelyn gasped, "not last night?"

"Yes. But why especially last night?"

"Because—" and she broke off, "nothing!"

McMahon, seeing that she was overwrought, became serious.

"Evelyn," he said, "you are exciting yourself without reason. The young woman you refer to is my niece. She is my sister's youngest child. Her name is Adèle de Ramusan. She lives in Paris, and has come over to make me a visit. It was for her sake that I was entertaining those people the other evening. They were all friends of hers. This ends a very simple matter; but such jealousy," he continued, sternly, "as you manifest upon the slightest occasion, is sufficient to cause a man to stop and consider."

"You mean consider as to whether you want me for your wife?" she asked, eagerly, still breathless, although relieved.

"Yes, just that! I do want you for my wife, but I want certain characteristics reasoned out of you."

Evelyn felt thankful to him for not mentioning her having struck him, a thing that she read was uppermost in his mind; yet she did not intend to be so easily appeased, and answered, arrogantly: "And if I don't choose to have them reasoned out of me?"

"You *will* choose to," he replied, compressing his lips.

"You think so!" she argued back, insolently, chafing under the implied control. "You think you can dominate me as you did all those people last night! You think I shall be afraid of you, hang on your words, that you can do what you will with me! Well, you can't! You don't even love me!" she burst forth, the hot tears spring-

ing to her eyes. It was the last flutter of her will as opposed to his. She knew it. McMahon was silent. "Do you?" She plunged her tear-wet face close to his.

"From your standpoint, no."

"What is my standpoint?"

"Well," said McMahon, smiling, "your idea of love is a man bereft of his senses, who wanders aimlessly about when out of your presence, and who, when in it, falls on his knees, raves over your beauty, and begs favors of you."

"And if I prefer that kind of man?"

"You will not find him in me! A demented being, shut up in a dimly lighted, highly scented room where he can't get his breath very well, is a being far removed from my ideal. A jealous woman is, too! I don't believe," he continued, contemplating her seriously, "that you have the first conception of love. You treat the idea as though it were a mere preference of a man for a certain woman, and a woman for a certain man, with no purpose beyond the expression in some form or another of that preference. Wild animals love that way, following simply an instinct that has long since in man been developed into something higher. This higher condition has been brought about by social conditions and religious discipline, two things that you have never considered."

"And I don't wish to!" she persisted.

"In your present mood, no; but you will when you have grown to understanding. Passion, Evelyn, is the basis of primitive love. Have you no desire to progress? Progression in love means transplanting jealousy by tolerance, tenderness, kindness of heart and charity—generosity! These are the things which accompany love in the civilized being."

"Nonsense!" said Evelyn, whose eyes rested hungrily on his great breast, where she longed to fling herself. "I don't know anything about all those things; you know I don't! I want you! And all that talk is your

way of putting me off—holding yourself aloof from me. Why? You are not that way with the others; they say what they like, and you smile. And, besides, you are not all those things you have been saying. Do you think you can fool me? Before, you could—you did! But you can't since last night. I have seen you on fire! I don't remember those men I used to have around me. I haven't spoken to one in two months. I have forgotten them. I think only of you, and you are cruel to me!" She pushed back a sleeve and put out an arm. "I am growing thin. Do you want to kill me? Is that it?"

McMahon looked into the white, tired face with the jealous, hungry eyes that were staring into his wistfully. He had seen that look in the eyes of a sensitive dog that loved him, and that he had been compelled to whip in the field, in order to teach it and make it of value. When he spoke, his voice was gentle.

"No," he said, "I want to open up a new life for you. I have been trying to prepare you for one; that is all. I have been trying to see if, by withholding from you the physical, I might not awaken within you a spark of the divine."

"You have not succeeded," said Evelyn, curtly.

"You are right. I have made little progress. Such scenes as the one of to-day prove it to me. Jealousy is the worst ailment that can befall a woman," he continued, reflectively, "because it is fatal to her social career."

"You care only for the world," said Evelyn, hopelessly.

"As a man of the world, I must care. I love the world, and so must you if you are to become my wife and take part in it. We are not living under the condition of Adam and Eve, who were made to be alone. A new set of conditions exists. Man is made for woman and woman for man, but not for to-day exclusively. There exists in society an innocent freedom in every-day intercourse between the

sexes that is resting and stimulating, and should in no way give rise to jealousy."

"I can't bear," said Evelyn, ignoring all argument and leaning toward him, "to have a woman come near you. I can't—it makes me suffer! What is the use of all those words? I don't even hear them! You may not intend it, but you are cruel to me."

"Perhaps so," he answered her, "but I have done what I thought was best. You are tired—I know that; but you are not yet prepared for rest."

His tenderness touched her, and she lowered her face in her hands, and sobbed like a worn-out child.

McMahon sat still regarding her. Her utter weariness appealed to him. She had been through much, and he knew that she was tired—tired out, in fact, by all the shocks she had received and the smoldering passion for him over which she had no control whatever; but he knew also that he could not with safety show any weakness toward her, that to take her for a moment in his arms would be but to give her the strength to combat him anew. In her present state, she was completely under his control, but, although possibly unconsciously, she was still watching her chances against him.

After a while he asked, quietly: "How old are you, Evelyn?"

"Twenty-seven."

"After all," he said, as though to himself, "yours has been a strong, pure life." Then, turning to her, "You have not been weak. You have held yourself intact; when all the possibilities within you have unfolded you will be a fine character, and I shall be very proud of you."

She listened to his voice with its rich, vibrating quality, as one in a dream. It seemed to her that she had been on a long voyage, and was now landed in a strange place. All the familiar objects of the room stared at her, vacantly. It was growing dark, and McMahon was becoming a gloomy shadow beside her.

"You kill the spirit, my child," said he, vaguely, his tones breaking the

stillness like soft music, "by indulging too much the life in the body, and the spirit of an undefiled woman is a beautiful thing." Then, after a pause, he added, "I am going away to-morrow for a few weeks——"

"What!" She lifted a white, startled face to his.

"Yes; and during that time Monsignor Capello will call upon you twice a week."

"Going away!" she echoed, helplessly, and then she repeated the words as though they were something she could not understand.

"Yes, on business, and also that you may go into three weeks' mental preparation for our marriage. Did you know that the time appointed is only four weeks off?"

"Yes," she answered, trembling; then, quickly, "but why must you go?"

"It is best."

She said nothing, and he parted from her quietly.

When Evelyn had watched him vanish from her sight into the still falling snow, she went back and lay down wearily on the divan, thinking how little he had yielded her of himself. She wished, for a moment, that she could control this love of him that was consuming her, that in one instant she might tear it out of her heart and be free—free to rejoice in herself and dominate others. But she knew that she would never be free again. Even now she was ready to follow him bare-headed and plead for the one kiss that, in parting, she felt he might have given her. She fell back on the divan sick at heart, pale and fatigued in body, and, looking into the three weeks of separation, they seemed to her years.

She thought long of the change that had come over her, subduing her and making her helpless, as though this man had bound her hand and foot and left her. But she raised her joined hands, and kissed the imaginary cord, and rained tears on them.

In the morning, at eleven, Monsignor Capello called, and, when Evelyn en-

tered the room, the holy yet worldly man started at the vision of half-pathetic loveliness she presented.

He talked to her long and soothingly, his voice velvety and sweet as McMahon's, but entirely different. Each sentence was arranged to fall like a poem on her ears, and, when he was gone, Evelyn felt herself dazed and a little stupefied, as one under the influence of a strong narcotic. All this talk about faith and the meaning of existence, the uplifting of the soul and cultivation of the divine within one, inspired her with the same curious wonder that the tales told her of fairyland and fairy life had done in her childhood. All that was left was an impression, but that was all the two men had expected in the beginning.

To Evelyn, she herself seemed entirely lost, and she was more and more perplexed by this new consideration of her individuality.

Later in the day, she drove to see Fanny, whom she found tête-à-tête with her friend Catherine over a charming little luncheon.

"What is all this, Evelyn about your joining the Catholic Church?" began Fanny, almost immediately. "Is it so?"

"I believe it is," said Evelyn, smiling faintly.

"Well, my dear girl, all that I can say is that your father and all the old line of Episcopal ancestors will turn in their graves!"

"They've been lying still so long it may do them good," Evelyn laughed, a little nervously.

"But why under heaven do you do such a thing?" asked Catherine. "If you start out, Mrs. Stanhope, by letting that big man dominate you, you'll soon be in the position of thousands of married women. They're all alike—those male things."

"Evelyn is not very apt to be dominated," laughed Fanny; "that's been her trouble all her life. The whole fact of the matter is that she likes the ceremony and the candles and all that sort of thing. Her own house always reminds you of a Roman Catholic altar."

"I do like it," said Evelyn, "that part, yes; and then——"

"You are not going to add that you like *him*!" exclaimed Catherine. "Oh, Mrs. Stanhope, never, never do that! You cared for a man, Fanny, and was it anything but misery?"

"Nothing," said Fanny, looking very doleful, as they arose from the table, "nothing."

## IX

THE wedding-day, which was the sixteenth of April, dawned full of triumphant fairness. The sky was as pale as a wild violet, and upon it billowy bunches of pure white clouds, the edges outlined like graphic sculpture, lay motionless. The breeze was sensuous in its sudden warmth, and filled with the perfume of early flowers that were being sold about the streets. Evelyn, in a rare bridal costume of lace, driving toward the church with Fanny, was also a lovely opening blossom of Spring.

The cathedral, upon their arrival, was already crowded. Society was well represented, and there were many most distinguished persons present.

The entire church, from the door to the altar, was decorated in white. There were festoons of silk and lace. White flowers were everywhere, and bunches of them, tied with handsome ribbons, had been tossed into the pews for the guests. The dead-white effect, gleaming in the brilliant lights, which glowed like flowers on fire, and the marvelously candle-illuminated altar, together with the scarlet robes of the cardinal, who was present, and the picturesque costumes of the priests and acolytes, made an impression never to be forgotten.

An almost unnatural pallor spread over Evelyn's lovely, expectant face as the music from the organ, combined with an enormous orchestra and three hundred voices, burst forth in a wedding-march that had been composed for the occasion by an old musician and life-long friend of McMahon's. Fanny spoke a few words in her ear,

and then, half-consciously, Evelyn moved forward down the aisle, like some exquisite decorated statue ready to be awakened into life.

McMahon, who was already at the chancel, stood out alone, tall and powerful like a gigantic rock which was to be her haven. He, too, was pale, but in his features glowed the sublime joy of one engaged in the mysteries of a great sacrament.

The service was long; the day grew warmer, so that the sweetness of the flowers weighed heavily on the air, and when, at last, Evelyn felt herself being driven through the streets with McMahon as her husband, proud and silent by her side, it seemed to her that literally she had stepped from one world to another. They passed her house, the blinds of which were all closed, and it did not seem possible that she had left it in the morning; indeed, it did not seem as if she had ever lived there. Nothing remained with her but this overwhelming present, that was like a turbulent flood, drowning and obliterating her past.

At McMahon's house, which they entered alone, more weighty magnificence awaited her, and she caught her breath wearily, burdened by the suffocating pomp of it all. A maid, standing behind the footman, conducted her immediately to the bridal chamber on the second floor, and Evelyn stood in the centre of it, half stupefied by the gorgeous effects. The entire room was in pale gold—the rugs, decorations, and even the fresh roses which hung about languorously with drooping, sensuous heads.

These pale roses covered all the woodwork of the room, and formed a canopy above the bed. Some strange perfume, unknown to Evelyn, was in the air, and the pictures in massive frames were of scenes stranger still, confusing but alluring.

When the maid had divested her of her wraps and taken a message from a footman who came to the door, she told Evelyn that she was expected below immediately, and they descended the broad, marble staircase, that had been

converted into a very terrace of scarlet flowers. From some distant part of the house, a string orchestra was making mystical, soul-enervating music that might have been the wailing voices of the flowers.

McMahon received her in his library. He was standing beneath the enormous chandelier, which was magnificently ablaze, this room, like the one above, being shut out from the daylight by heavy curtains.

This, she felt, was the abode—that was the word that came to her—of reason. In a way, it stifled her, but Evelyn was brave. The massive, ebony furniture, the silent books, the grave, Oriental draperies, guarding, as it were, the very portals, all spoke to her in a foreign language. But it was here that McMahon, supreme egotist, preferred to receive her. Here he was at home, in his element; here every line of drapery, every binding of the books, every covering of the table and chairs spoke for him and of him. A wonderful smile was on his face as he stretched out his hands to her.

"Evelyn," he said, a little eagerly, "I have been a mystery to you, a cruel mystery; but the time has come for all mysteries to be done away with, and for you to know and understand me."

He led her to a broad couch, and, seating himself beside her, took her hands in his and looked intently at her.

"You are beautiful," he went on. "You charmed me from the very first, and that charm lay in your unconscious pride and self-appreciation, which had guarded you in the midst of the very temptations with which you deliberately surrounded yourself. I saw that your one great and dominant characteristic was vanity, vanity run mad, but that, while it had led you into error, it had kept you unspotted for me. You had protected yourself from yourself, and I wanted you above all things, more than you dreamed, for my wife. I have never been unmindful of your charms, but because of many things I did not dare let you feel too well aware of it. Once you felt



me your slave, I should have lost the hope of your love."

He paused, and she looked up at him with timid, yet fearless eyes. Excitement lurked in their depths, but they were clear as the beautiful day outside. He had released her hands, and that was a relief, for the clasp of those enormous, warm fingers, quivering with the magnetism of a powerful personality, made it difficult for her to follow him clearly, and she did not wish to lose one syllable of the sentences, for which she was more than hungry. At last he was speaking, confessing himself.

"Yes," she finally said to him, under her breath, "go on."

McMahon, whose eyes were looking beyond her, started.

"Love," he said, reflectively, "love, Evelyn, is the only thing in this life that is given. Anything else, even the body, can be bought; but love is the only given thing. It is given, given only, even given when not asked for; it has no price, and this priceless thing was what I wanted. I wanted you to love me, love me, even though you felt that I gave you no return. Perhaps I was cruel, but I always knew that I intended to make it up to you. I had had all that money could buy; I wanted that which money could not buy or take away. No wonder I have smiled when you asked me of love—if I loved you—you, who know no more of love than the humming-bird hovering above a flower! Love," he said, reverentially, "love, the great mystery, that supreme union of body and soul which takes place when the identity of each loses itself in its natural mate, and body and soul vibrate sympathetically with nature's harmonies and become related to the very stars and the whole firmament!"

He had risen, and was standing before her, his powerful but modulated voice sounding out in the muffled room.

"Ah, Evelyn!" he exclaimed, "when once you have known my love you will have known all earthly heaven! You are tired of being dragged, blindfolded, up to unknown heights, but you have been brave and strong and full of pride;

you have not cried out, and I have rewards for you, a new one for each day of your life, and you have rewards for me, for I, too, have been strong and patient!

"I marvel," he went on, as he took his seat again, "at the peculiar custom of giving an entertainment and then going away on a journey, which is the prevalent method, immediately after the marriage ceremony. If ever there was a time when a man should be alone with his wife in his own home, it is upon their marriage day. Do you, Evelyn, not think it better that we are at home and alone?"

Evelyn smiled, dreamily. She really had no thoughts; her emotions completely took possession of her.

"There are three important events," McMahon went on, earnestly, "in existence: birth, marriage, death. All three are glorious; marriage, however, is the only one that man has control of; it is, therefore, the supreme event of his existence. Marriage is a sacrament that should be the very consummation of manhood. There should be preparation, waiting, self-control, abstinence from all sex thought, and fasting, that the mind and body may both become capable of appreciation of the marvelous event, the day of all things in one. There should be, first of all, recognition of God, the magician, the inventor; then prayer for worthiness. Music should follow, and all the magnificence of the floral world be made to do service and all the finely flavored dishes that go to make up a great feast should be prepared, and there should be humble contemplation and tremendous exaltation. The man should feel himself a god, worthy of a god's experiences, and the woman should feel herself a goddess! This is what I have tried to prepare you for."

McMahon had leaned over her as he spoke these last words; now he leaned back, still regarding her.

All about Evelyn was the magnetism of this man under the influence of a supreme passion, to which he was giving rein. The very atmosphere was charged with it, and it seemed to her

that, if she put out her hand, it would crackle and sparkle and sting her. She felt, in his dominating presence, like a pale, faint orchid that might melt and fade away in this highly charged room.

"Come," said McMahon, seeing her mood; "we will breakfast now."

He led her through the broad hall into a room all crystal, it seemed to her, from ceiling to floor. The windows were open, and warm sunlight streamed in, reflecting the cut-glass and shining gold service on the table. The music was distinctly audible here. The servants moved forward, but McMahon drew her chair himself, and lingered over her as though unwilling that the table should separate them. Evelyn felt a little suffocated by the sudden joy that filled her; her throat was dry, and she drank eagerly of the wine that McMahon directed be immediately served her.

At five o'clock, they arose from the table, and McMahon escorted her to her chamber.

"I shall leave you now to rest," he said. "Forsake these bridal robes, be made comfortable. Take no book in your hand, look at nothing, speak to no one, not even the maid. Think—but only of me!"

He lifted her warm, flushed face to his, looked a full half-minute deep into her eyes, and turned and left her.

Evelyn moved aimlessly into the room. The maid, a remarkably skilful little Japanese, undressed her and put upon her an embroidered robe of her own country which she herself had made. So soft and fragrant and exquisite it was that Evelyn felt herself being enfolded in a costume of thornless flowers. The strange perfume still lingered in the air, the lights glowed through their silken shades—a thousand of them, she thought. The maid arranged the pillows on her couch, placed beside it a small, inlaid table with a cordial and a little jeweled bell, and then, bowing low, left noiselessly.

Evelyn lay back in the pillows with

a feeling of relief. The constant panorama and ponderous splendor of the day had wearied her. For a moment, as she closed her eyes, McMahon rose up before her like some powerful monster making ready to devour her. She trembled beneath the remembrance of his smoldering presence and those burning looks that he had forced, like slow fire, into her eyes. And then unnatural joy stirred her.

This brilliant, overpowering, convincing man, who dominated thousands at will, and who, by a look, bereft her of all strength, was something incomprehensible; yet he was also the realization of a dream of years. She experienced a delightful satisfaction in the fact that she had never cheapened herself, and rejoiced in all the strength and health and beauty that she had unconsciously preserved for him. In her fluctuating thoughts, he was a contradiction, and yet, in a way, a harmonious whole. His tremendous value and his broad grasp upon the pleasures of life puzzled her, whose existence had been limited to merely external contemplation.

It seemed to Evelyn that she had been asleep all her life in a narrow cell, and had awakened suddenly in a paradise where wonder after wonder was being presented to her gradually opening eyes. McMahon had told her, while ascending the steps, that her life from that hour would be a succession of revelations.

The cordial remained untouched, and the jeweled bell silent, as the hours passed. Once only did the little maid enter, and then but to touch a match to the driftwood that was piled high on the polished andirons. A flood of vari-colored flames, violet, scarlet, yellow and blue, raced up the broad chimney merrily, and played over her as in a mad, prankish game. The warmth touched her sensuously, and her eyes remained closed. Possibly she slept, for when she did open them it was suddenly and with a slight start. McMahon was standing beside the couch, gazing rapturously upon her.

## X

EVELYN's smile had become gentle. She no longer moved about restlessly; in her eyes was a new-found light of intelligent happiness. No living being ever looked more lovely than she did one clear, cool July day, seated at the luncheon table surrounded by a party of women guests. By her side was the boy child of whom McMahon had dreamed when he first beheld her.

Nine years had passed, and the child was eight years old, remarkably well grown, dark like the father, but with all the radiant beauty of his mother reflected in his face—a child cast in the heroic mold of the McMahons, proud and imperious, while at the same time winning and sensitive, a beautiful child, who, having known only the ultra refinements of life and the luxuries of untold wealth, had yet been severely disciplined.

Evelyn's hand rested on his head controllingly, a head well-poised and covered caressingly with brown, silken curls that were, however, cut almost short. He was waiting politely, but eagerly, for a lull in the conversation when he might speak to her. His lips were parted, and his dark eyes were in hers.

Evelyn knew what the child was waiting to ask, and had decided against him, but was considering her decision. To refuse him anything gave her pain. He was a young athlete, who could ride a horse well, toss his dumb-bells and Indian clubs, swim like a fish, and even row a boat over heavy waves; but the breakers were unusually high to-day, every moment exploding like thunder on the shore, beneath a wild wind that tore them roughly asunder. And the boy's father was away. She did not wish the child to go to the beach, and she knew he was about to ask her consent to do so. The boy was patient, but called upon her at last.

"Etienne, my darling, I am afraid," was all she said.

"But, mother, I am not afraid," replied the child.

"Hear the wind," answered Evelyn, "and how the waves are dashing against the shore!"

"That is glorious, mother! It is the best day we have had!"

"And you will not think of going in the water?"

The eager young face clouded. "If you say so, I cannot."

"Oh, do let the child go, Evelyn!" said Fanny, who was among her guests.

"Just to the beach, then," consented Evelyn, reluctantly, "and never for one moment out of the sight of Jacques. You promise?"

"Yes, mother," said the boy, who had quickly arisen, "I promise."

He kissed her and ran from the room, but in an instant returned. "If only you would let me go out on the raft to see them jump!" he exclaimed, eagerly.

"Very well; only, you must hold Jacques by the hand!"

"A model boy!" sighed Catherine, for whom Fanny had secured an invitation for a couple of weeks. "How on earth did you accomplish it, Mrs. McMahon?"

"Oh, I never did," Evelyn laughed; "his father manages him!"

"And has he always obeyed that way?"

"Oh, no!" said Evelyn, and her brow momentarily contracted. "He has a will that I could never have learned to control. There have been terrible scenes, lasting sometimes a whole day, between himself and his father, but he generally obeys now; he knows that he must."

She turned to the window, and looked out, for she had grown restless about the child.

For several days the weather had been damp and stormy, but to-day a high wind had sprung up, and the air was as clear as crystal. In front of her lay the beautiful lawn of her seashore villa, where the dampness of the trees and grass glistened in the sunlight, and the hundreds of blooming flowers, recovering from their drenching, were attempting to begin their

daily task of giving out their beauty and sweetness. Not a cloud crossed the sky, clear and metallic as a sheet of tin, and the pebbles in the broad walk that led to the iron gate shone like diamonds. The wind still tore by frantically, and the waves broke even louder on the shore.

"I can't be satisfied," she said, turning to her guests. "Etienne is perfectly fearless, and Jacques a dreamer, at times; if you will excuse me, I will follow him to the beach."

"In this wind?" asked Fanny.

"Yes, I feel that I must. If Mr. McMahon returns, tell him to come for us."

"Evelyn, you are absurd about that child," said Fanny, petulantly.

"I am," said Evelyn; "I know it, but it always seems the first day that I have had him and the last day that I shall. I wish I could get over it."

"Oh, you will!" said Catherine, indifferently.

As Evelyn left the room, one of the women, who seemed to experience relief, inquired: "Shall we gossip or play billiards?"

"Oh, gossip," answered Fanny, who was beginning to detest moving about. "Evelyn never gossips—never did, even before she married, and for that reason she was always tiresome—that is, to me. Let's talk while we can!" And she settled herself.

In the meantime, Evelyn had proceeded to the beach. Her walk, in spite of the wind, had been a pleasant one. There was a freshness in the day, a wild kind of riotous healthfulness to which her whole being responded. Thrice she laughed aloud in the face of the wind playing elfish pranks with her skirts, boa and feathers. It was a light-hearted game in which she was forced to take part, but finally enjoyed. She was still a savage at heart, and was glad to be away from her guests, who bored her. She did her part in the social world because it was required of her, but she did it like an animal who performs its tricks on the stage, and rejoices in the signal

that for a time, at least, it is all over. The best hours of her life were when McMahon took her out with him alone on their yacht, or, better still, in their sailing boat, for that was complete isolation.

Nine years under his influence had made wonderful improvements in her. She was the same, except that her eyes had been opened and her environment enlarged. She saw all the flowers as she went along, and enjoyed the effect of the glistening rain-drops on everything. She had been taught to observe and be appreciative. She could not be taught to care for people. McMahon knew this, but he never discussed it with her. She was an open book to him. He knew her limitations as well as her charms. He could always control her, and his purpose, through her, had been fulfilled. She worshiped him, and he was interested in no other woman. He had at last convinced her that he was not impressionable, and that women did not especially interest him. This state of affairs did not come at once; it was the result of years of silent and unobtrusive effort on his part that had finally availed. McMahon knew that one appreciative glance at a woman would in a second undo this patient effort, and he was careful not to give her pain. He believed that, first of all, a man should make his wife happy, and then not disturb her peace. He allowed her to expend all the passion of her being violently upon himself, and he was always appreciative. Her love for him was a new passion born every day. He took care to lead her on, and in this way he made a heaven for her.

The boy was McMahon's pride, but he put her before the child. In all things, she was first. The boy was the realization of his fondest hope, his most cherished dream, but it was she who had made the dream a reality. He never forgot that, nor what he owed her beauty and strength and courage—what *her* ancestry had done. He was harsh, at times, with the child, but never with her. She suffered

over his treatment of the boy, but she never interfered. She did not believe in the child's enforced horse-back rides in the cold Winter mornings, the icy plunge in the bath when fresh from his warm bed, and the violent out-door exercises of wood-chopping; but she said nothing, and her reward was the remarkable strength and perfection of the boy.

She could see him now, far out on the raft where she had consented to let him go, his hand, as he had promised, in Jacques's, his white suit and patent-leather shoes shining in the sunlight.

While there was no abatement of the violence of the waves, rising, as it were, like huge walls from the bottom of the sea to tumble and be destroyed as they reached the shore, the wind was subsiding. Groups of people were arriving, and smart automobiles, open carriages and vehicles with restless or passive horses, stood about, as usual. There was scarcely any one in the water, save some acrobats and venturesome boys, and among the latter Evelyn recognized Harry, a lad of eleven, who was Etienne's friend and hero, and she understood, with a smile, the child's eagerness to join his comrade.

The wind subsided suddenly, only blowing in occasional fitful, but now almost caressing, gusts, and more and more people were arriving. Soon the scene had all of its accustomed life and variety, and Evelyn was experiencing the pleasures of a perfect day, after a week of somberness.

Suddenly, however, a sharp cry escaped her. Etienne had freed himself from Jacques's hand, and plunged headlong into the sea. A moment later, he appeared swimming hard with one hand, and holding fast to something with the other. Her cry had attracted attention, people had rushed to her, and all eyes now followed hers, fixed in horror on the water.

"My God!" said a man, "that brave little chap is bringing some one in! The boat! the boat!"

The whole beach took up the cry, that sounded like a wail of terror. Faces were pale, exclamations were quick and sharp as the child appeared and disappeared before their gaze.

Evelyn stood for a moment, speechless, and then tore to the water's edge, where a wave dashed up and wet her to the knees.

"Etienne! Etienne!" she screamed, "release your hold and swim to me!"

But Etienne held fast to what he had seized, keeping up with difficulty, yet never once releasing his clutch.

The boat was launched, but the power of the sea, still holding all the agitation of the recent storm, plunged against it wildly and prevented its progress. The excitement on the shore increased, children were climbing to their fathers' shoulders, women turned away, or hid their faces in their hands. And then, an additional horror was lent to the situation when it was seen that a huge beam was pursuing the boy, like an enraged monster, one second being almost upon him, the next receding as though to gain strength for a renewed attack. If it should strike him, all hope would be gone. But the onlookers had not reckoned on the child's strength. The beam touched him lightly, and one moment he was lost to sight, but the next he rose again, still clinging to that something which he held.

A shout of triumph went up, and at that moment McMahon reached the scene. He was tearing off his coat, when a big wave that was like a rising field of snow dashed in and rolled the children—for Etienne still held Harry—to his feet.

Evelyn fell down with a cry of joy before the child, but McMahon raised her, and, putting her to one side, called sharply to the boy. His whole being was aroused to the utmost. The child's life was second in his mind—if only he had not been overpowered and vanquished. He was terrible to behold in this moment. His face was white even to the lips, and an awful look, the look of the McMahons when courage was at stake, came into his



face. The child was not dead; therefore, he must be equal to his effort, he must rise upon his feet and stand before them all, a hero and a conqueror! Harry was being removed, but Etienne, this child of his blood, must stand up of himself! He knew the boy's powerful strength, and he called upon it.

"Etienne!" he cried, in a tense, hoarse voice, "open your eyes, my son, and stand up!"

"Yes, father," responded the child; but he lay still.

"Etienne!" exclaimed McMahon, excitedly, "aren't you a man?"

"Yes, father," and he opened his eyes.

"Then the sea hasn't conquered you!"

"My God!" exclaimed Fanny, arriving with the others on the scene; "what has happened?"

"Etienne!" gasped Evelyn, who was ashen with a wild horror in her eyes, "he brought in a boy, and it has killed him!"

Then Etienne, controlled by McMahon and his own pride, rose and stood like a ghost in his dripping clothes before them. One shoe and sock were gone, and the bare foot was like a piece of marble. Evelyn dropped down and pressed her lips to it, but McMahon again lifted her, and at that moment the doctor, who had been reviving Harry, arrived on the scene.

"Well, my young man," he asked, "are you hurt anywhere?"

"Yes," said Etienne, in a weak voice; "something struck me—here," he touched his shoulder, "just as that big wave rolled us in."

The doctor attempted to lift the child's arm, but Etienne shrank and cried out in pain.

"A dislocation of the shoulder," pronounced the physician. "It should be set at once, but I doubt if he can stand the pain. Will you take down his blouse, madame?" he said, turning to Evelyn.

Carefully, but with trembling hands, Evelyn unbuttoned and took

off the wet garment, exposing the poor little shoulder, sore and mangled and rapidly turning black.

"We will get him home," said the doctor, "and give him something; only, there must be no delay."

"It would be better, doctor, if it could be done at once?" asked McMahon, in a calm voice.

"It would be, certainly."

"Etienne, you said you were a man. Can you stand pain like a man?"

"Yes, sir," said the child.

"Go ahead, doctor; he will not flinch."

But as the doctor laid his hand upon the child, Evelyn sprang between them.

"No, no!" she cried, falling on her knees before her boy, "this is too much! It cannot be, Etienne," looking up at her husband with streaming eyes. "You forget—he is a baby!"

"She is right," said the doctor; "let him be taken home. I will go to the druggist, and follow immediately."

And so McMahon, with his heart full of pride that the child had not quailed, bore him tenderly in his great arms to the open carriage which Jacques had rushed for and had ready.

Evelyn got in, and McMahon laid him across her lap in response to her open arms, and threw a blanket over him.

"Drive slowly," he commanded, "and with great care," as the brougham moved off.

"Mother," said Etienne, faintly, a few moments later, "where is my father?"

"Following us, my darling. They are all coming."

"And he can't see me?"

"No, my darling; do you want him?"

"No," said the child, feebly, while his lids fluttered, "but are you *sure* he can't see me—because—I—I—can't hold out any longer!" And he fainted.

## XI

THE household, with its guests and numerous servants, was asleep, but the father and mother of Etienne were still awake; they had been keeping watch. The clock had just struck two. Far off in the distance, the waves could be heard pounding the shore. A round, bright moon was sailing across the sky, in and out of white and jet-black clouds. To the watchers, the outside world was as though it had no existence; all their thoughts had been within the four walls of the room which contained the three.

Evelyn was seated opposite her husband, her whole attitude showing the strain and fatigue she had experienced; but McMahon's face revealed nothing. At last, he took up a book, and then, following the habit of a lifetime, Evelyn arose and looked out of the window. But almost instantly she returned, and very quietly laid a piece of wood on the dying fire. The night was chilly, almost cold.

McMahon was idly turning the leaves of the book. After a while, he put it down, and looked across at her.

"Of what are you thinking, Evelyn?" he asked, in a low voice.

She lifted her pale face to him, seeming, in her soft, white *négligée*, like some anguish-stricken saint.

"I was thinking of what I would be to you this moment if Etienne had been drowned—if he didn't exist."

"Did you decide?"

"No."

"It is not a difficult problem."

"I don't know; I think it is. You know, I found out long since why you married me."

"How did you find out?"

"I don't know; it came to me. At first, it hurt me and I suffered then, but I got used to it; I was just thinking though——"

McMahon lifted his hand in protest, rose in the old way and came and stood before her. "If Etienne had died, Evelyn, I should have trans-

ferred my love for him to you—that would have been all."

Evelyn sprang quickly, but silently, to her feet.

"You would still have loved me?"

"I should have loved you more—you would have needed more love."

He took her to him in a close embrace, and then, bending her head back, kissed her. "You are my wife—he is my son; you were my wife before Etienne existed; nothing can ever change that."

There was a gasp in Evelyn's throat as she asked, under her breath, "You mean that?"

"I do, Evelyn; you have won your own place, and have more than fulfilled my every hope. Go, now, and rest, my child; you are worn out. If he calls you, I will come at once for you."

Free always in her caresses, she drew his face down once more to her own. "Etienne, to-day he was all you—I know that—but there was just some of me, too—a little—wasn't there?"

"Very much of you, dearest; he is always very much of you."

"And I shall perform—that part of me, I mean—great deeds through him!"

"Yes!"

"Come, let us look at him," she pleaded, excitedly, in a whisper.

Together, they approached the bedside of the sleeping child.

The injured shoulder had been put in a cast, the body looked constrained and unnatural, the young face bore marks of pain and suffering, but there was a beauty in it which had never been there before—the beauty of the victor. Evelyn saw her child's pain. McMahon saw only the victory.

After a while, he forced her to rest, and when she left him he returned to the bedside, where he stood a long time, rejoicing in his brave child, his eyes fixed in a rapt gaze on the pale little face.

This had indeed been a day of triumph! The child who was to represent him, him and all his forefathers, had been tested and was equal to his race!

A smile hovered about McMahon's lips, and a dull fire burned in his eyes, as once more he beheld in mind the courageous boy holding fast to his friend in the very face of death, and later, with a will equal to his own, standing up, though the strength to do so had been buffeted out of him.

Finally, a change came over his features—that spiritual look which almost forced people to their knees—and he looked up. The next moment, the great head was lowered, the lips moved silently, and he made upon his breast, quickly, the sign of the cross.

For a long time, he stood thus in the firelight, the stillness broken only by the breathing or a movement of the child.

At last, he turned, seated himself deliberately at a table, and, arranging the light so that it did not shine in the child's eyes, took up his book and began to read.

"Father!" called Etienne, as the day began to break.

"Well, my son?" He arose and went to the bedside.

"I have had a dream!"

"Of what, Etienne?"

"I dreamed that I was at the foot of a high mountain, and every moment something came rushing down to de-

stroy me. There were men, both large and small; some were dwarfs who carried large clubs, and some were giants with enormous, uplifted fists, and there were wild animals, lions and other big ones!"

"That was a terrible dream, Etienne! It was produced, though, by the medicines you took to make you sleep."

"No, it was a grand dream, father, for I was stronger than any of them, and they lay, at last, every one of them, dead at my feet. And, then, I tore to the top of the mountain, where a beautiful day was breaking, and I was happy!"

McMahon leaned forward, and looked into the child's eager, feverish eyes.

"You *are* stronger than all of them, Etienne," he whispered, excitedly. "You will vanquish them all and reach the top of the mountain and see a great day break; for," his voice was lower and his eyes almost in the child's, "you are a McMahon!"

He turned at a light sound, and Evelyn, with eager countenance, was standing in the doorway.

At her back, through a hall window, McMahon could see the rising sun, and she seemed to be a part of it.



## WHAT WORRIED HER

HE—My wife is conversant with seven languages.

SHE—Indeed! She ought to be happy.

HE—But she isn't. She can't speak them all at once.



## DETERMINED TO HAVE ONE

SHE—If I go into the conservatory with you, Jack, you won't kiss me, will you?

HE—No.

SHE—What if I remain here?

## NIGHT TRAVEL

O NEAR lights, and far lights,  
And every light a home!  
And how they gladden, sadden us,  
Who late and early roam!

But sad lights and glad lights,  
By flash and gleam we speed  
Across the darkness to a light  
We love, and know, and need!

ARTHUR STRINGER.



## IN THE TOILS OF THE WIRE

BOX-OFFICE MAN (*over telephone*)—I can give you two aisle seats in G;  
centre of the house; fine seats.

SAMPSON—All right; hold them for me.

BOX-OFFICE MAN—What name?

SAMPSON—Sampson.

BOX-OFFICE MAN (*uncertainly*)—Tampson?

SAMPSON (*reiterating with care*)—Sampson!

BOX-OFFICE MAN (*confidently*)—Oh! Ransom!

SAMPSON (*impatiently*)—No, no! Samp-son!

BOX-OFFICE MAN (*wearily*)—Spell it, please.

SAMPSON—S-a-m, Sam—

BOX-OFFICE MAN—S-a-n, San; all right.

SAMPSON (*louder*)—No, no! S-a-m; m, m—k, l, m—

BOX-OFFICE MAN—S-a-m, k-l-m; go on.

SAMPSON—P-s.

BOX-OFFICE MAN—T-s.

SAMPSON (*irascibly*)—No, no! can't you hear straight?

BOX-OFFICE MAN (*angrily*)—Can't you mumble straight?

CENTRAL (*sociably*)—Through?

SAMPSON

BOX-OFFICE MAN } (*together, ungallantly*)—No!! Keep off! Get out!

TELEPHONE (*diabolically*)—Brrrrrrr!!! Brock! brock! brock! brock! brock!  
plunk! plunk!!

SAMPSON (*in a voice that seems to have gone to Chicago, faintly but desperately*)  
—P—not t; n, o, p; p, s-o-n!

BOX-OFFICE MAN (*triumphantly*)—N-o-p; p-s-o-n.

SAMPSON (*relieved*)—Good! Now spell.

BOX-OFFICE MAN (*with great precision*)—S-a-m-k-l-m-n-o-p-p-s-o-n. (*Pro-  
nouncing with slight effort*) Samklmnoppson!

ROY MELBOURNE CHALMERS.

# THE MAGIC SONG

By Zona Gale

THE old queen, in her quiet hall,  
Dozed on her golden throne;  
The latticed shadows fell athwart  
The floor of patterned stone;  
The purple-poppied arras moved,  
By dreaming zephyrs blown.

An old, sad man, with tired eyes  
And pipes of withered wood,  
Knelt by the gray queen's side, and piped,  
To those who understood,  
Lyrics of all whose hearts are sweet  
With roses in their blood.

The ancient courtiers idly leaned,  
And some fell whispering;  
For all the song was veiled to them  
Who heard the wild voice sing,  
And all its ecstasy was masked  
And looked a ghostly thing.

All you who dream you love, oh, love  
With dreams and wonderment,  
Moon-magic and star-sorcery  
To all your longing lent,  
Always the red wine of the heart  
With silver dew-drops blent!

He sang of iris-blossoms steeped  
In breath of water-close;  
He sang of silver lilies lipped  
With clear, pale line of rose;  
He sang of silence and the stars,  
And what the silence knows.

A song of sun and amber,  
Of sheaves and little wings,  
A song of sun and nectar  
And all the Summer brings.  
Come out, come out and bathe in wine  
Of wind and silver things that shine;  
Crystal and coral intertwine,  
And there is gold to breathe!



*THE SMART SET*

A song of stars and altars  
And censers of the night,  
A song of stars and cymbals  
And brush of moths aflight.  
Come out, come out, O Love, O You  
Whose heart is made of flame and dew;  
Dream, for the singing day is through!  
Come out and be the dark!

But all the world-worn courtiers knew  
Was what the world had taught;  
They had no wonder in their hearts  
For what the years had brought;  
They only thought of dust and stones,  
And talked of what they thought.

Yet, two there were within the hall  
Whose upturned faces met  
The touch of little brushing hands  
Of sudden spirits set  
At liberty by silver notes  
That lifted, like a net.

One was the Prince Olivier;  
Like a young god he stood,  
And drank the wine the singer poured,  
And smiled as if he could  
Have chosen notes more mad and sweet  
To answer, if he would.

And one was Lady Lionelle,  
In silken bodice set  
With many a pearl, and ropes of pearl  
On her skirt's violet.  
And, oh, these two near sang aloud  
Whene'er their glances met.

Only they two of all the court  
Could read the singers' song;  
Only they two could hear the voice  
Come calling, long and long,  
Sweet as the inmost thought of each—  
For gods can think no wrong.

How other could it be that night  
Than, as the strange dark fell  
Young Prince Olivier bear away  
The Lady Lionelle?  
How other could it be? And so  
Shall we not call it well?

True may it be that she was poor  
And plighted to a peer  
Both bitter old and bitter bad,  
Who held her very dear.  
And Prince Olivier lost the crown  
And throne that he stood near.

And true it was that all the court  
Cried out and beat its breast,  
And mourned that it had harbored these  
Lost souls, and had not guessed;  
And true the queen, from her dry husk  
Of heart, cried with the rest.

Still, there was one who heard and smiled;  
Still there was one who said:  
"These old peers, drunk with evil things  
On which their hearts have fed,  
Who leer and point and cover sin,  
They are the damned instead!"

For, faint above the babel cries  
He heard the sound of wind,  
And breathed the air that steals among  
The flowers the fairies find;  
And knew the two who went away  
Were summoned by their kind.

He took his pipes of withered wood,  
And wandered from the hall;  
Sudden the sunshine, as he passed,  
Made glad the castle wall;  
The courtiers did not see, but cried  
And cursed him, one and all.

Piping a song, sweet, sweet and wild,  
Right gaily forth went he;  
The years fell from his hair—and, lo!  
The wakened eye might see  
He was the god of love himself—  
And Love had set him free!



## HIS IDEA

SHE—Are you engaged to one of the Goodlow twins?  
HE—To both.  
SHE—Why get engaged to both?  
HE—To avoid confusion.

## IN ABSENCE

IT matters not how far I fare,  
 Or in what land I bide,  
 Your voice sings ever on the air,  
 Your face shines at my side.

For me each crimson flower that slips  
 Its velvet sheath of green  
 Yields the remembrance of your lips  
 With all their sweets between.

Your hair is in the dusk that lies  
 Around me when I rest;  
 My only stars are your dear eyes,  
 Love's own and loveliest.

Happy am I, though far apart  
 From all that makes life dear:  
 Love dwells contented in my heart,  
 Exiled yet always near.

Then take my message, Sweet, and know  
 How far your love has flown  
 To cheer and bless your lover, so  
 Lonely, but not alone:

I send it from the drowsy South,  
 A dream of my delight,  
 A message to your rosebud mouth—  
 A kiss, and a good night!

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.



## THANKFUL FOR THAT

HE—Then you regret our engagement, do you?  
 SHE—Oh, no; but I am glad it is no worse.



ETHEL—I wonder if I shall, like this old lady in the paper, live to be a hundred.  
 MAUD—Not if you remain at twenty-two much longer.

# THE BISHOP'S WILD OATS

By Jean D. Hallowell

THE bishop and his young wife were quarreling in their room. I could hear their voices distinctly through the register where I sat drying my hair. I did not deliberately set out to be an eavesdropper, but with the first astonishing sound of discord, I could no more have slammed the register than I could have slammed the covers of an exciting novel.

"I shall go crazy! I shall go crazy! *I shall go crazy!*" wailed the bishop's young wife.

"You won't do any such thing," said the bishop.

"I *will* if I want to," snapped the bride, with a glint in her voice that was extremely dangerous. "I'm bored to death! Wherever we go it's just, 'heathen, heathen, heathen,' till I wish I'd never seen a church, or heard a psalm, or——"

"Met me?" interpolated the bishop, drily.

"Well, p-e-r-h-a-p-s," acknowledged the young wife, with a sniffle of tears.

"You should have thought of all that before," said the bishop, sarcastically. "It's a trifle late now. We have been married six months."

"I know it's too late!" exclaimed the young wife, defiantly. "Of course it's too late! But what are we going to do about it? I simply can't stand this life any longer. I say I'm bored to death—yes, to *death*! No parties, no fun, no *anything*. Why, my wedding clothes are rotting in my trunk. Yes, I said *rotting*, and all because you think they are too gay for a bishop and his wife to sport on a special trip to raise money for the heathen. I tell you, I *h-a-t-e* the heathen!"

The bishop's voice muttered some-

thing about, "But you knew I was a missionary bishop when you married me."

"Of course, I knew it!" cried the shrill little tempery voice. "Of course, I knew it, and thought it was a game I'd like to play. When you've only played with choir boys, and once an organist, it seems pretty interesting to catch a bishop, and sail in and cut out all the church-members and the leader of the ladies' missionary society. I thought it would be fun to be the head of everything, and travel around the country, and be entertained by everybody, and see a lot of fine houses, and everything. But, goodness me, I'm sick to death of it! And I want to go home, and, if you don't wish a scandal, you'll have to go home, too. Oh, the heathen, heathen, heathen, wherever we go! Why, if a man's business is shoe-strings, or mines, or flannel wrappers, people don't talk to him about it night and day as though he didn't know anything else! But you—goodness! Every dinner we go to, every luncheon, every everything, people simply swamp us with heathen, heathen, heathen! And it's, 'Don't you find the work *very* interesting?' and, 'Isn't it exalting to be engaged in such a noble enterprise?' and, 'Couldn't you tell that funny story again—*again*—that you told at St. Peter's?' and, 'How many Bibles was it that you gave away at Easter, and how many shirts at Christmas?' and, 'Will you say the blessing?'—that same old blessing! and, 'Won't you make a few remarks?' and, '*Please* do read aloud your famous article on "Women and the Church."'" And such palaverings over you! Why,

you're nothing but a man—and rather a middle-aged man, and rather a fat, middle-aged man——”

Then the bishop got up and walked around the room, and said things. The furnace rumbled so that I could not hear just what the things were, but they were distinctly *things*!

An hour later, at dinner, the bishop's young wife appeared, a trifle pale but distractingly pretty in a very pink and worldly little gown. There were heavy circles under the bishop's eyes, and his face had a curious gaunt and ascetic expression which contrasted oddly with his rather smug and portly figure.

With the first drawing back of chairs and settling of guests into places, the bishop plunged at once into his solemn intoning of, "Almighty Father, we thank Thee for Thy great bounties, and trust that in the lust of life we may not forget—" Then, suddenly, the bishop stopped short and floundered painfully. "—may not forget—forget—forget"—he kept reiterating, stentoriously, "forget to—" The sweat started on his forehead, and he ground his teeth like an angry bull-dog, when into the stress of that awful second piped the treble voice of the bishop's young wife. "May not forget," she recited, glibly, "to be ever mindful of the time when we must lie down in the dust." Then she shook herself like a kitten after a bath, and some one tittered down at the end of the table, and the bishop said, "O-h—!" and excused himself from dinner on the ground of sudden illness; but his young wife stayed amiably at the table, and flirted quite ingenuously with a theological student who did not seem particularly interested in any far-away heathen.

As for me, I was in misery all through dinner. The degradation of being an eavesdropper had begun to get in its deadly work, and I could neither enjoy my food nor gaze with blank imperturbability into the big, innocent, blue eyes of the bishop's young wife who sat directly opposite me. It seemed to me that she must

see at a glance that I was a canny, crafty and meddlesome old spinster; and so reproached and guilty did I feel, that, when the minister asked me suddenly what my opinion was regarding divorce, I answered, in great confusion, "Those whom man hath joined together let not God put asunder." And the bishop's young wife looked up in gleeful surprise, and winked one of her big blue eyes at me.

I was glad enough when dinner was over, and I could plead headache to my hostess, and retire to my room to contemplate the day's happenings and my own unlooked-for fall from grace. By ten o'clock, I was quite ready to put out my light and trust my soul to my Maker, when there came a timid knock at the door, and, without further warning, the bishop's young wife, clad in a marvelous black-and-silver kimono, entered my room, curled herself up on my lounge, and proceeded to make herself perfectly at home.

"That was a jolly old break you made at dinner," she announced, "and it pretty well fits my case. 'Those whom man hath joined together, let not God put asunder.' Well, religion is certainly thrusting a big wedge between the bishop and me. But you didn't mean to say it, did you? You and the bishop were both a bit absent-minded. I wonder why. Did you ever marry a bishop?" continued my visitor, pleasantly; then, with sudden, apologetic patronage, "Oh, I forgot! you have never married anybody. Well," with a ponderous sigh, "marriage is indeed a serious thing. It is all true, as the books say, about its being a lottery. I have tried it, and I know. Behold," with a little flourish, "an unhappy wife! And I've come to you to talk it all over, and ask your advice."

In vain I protested about the rank inadvisability of such a conversation. The bride insisted upon giving her confidence.

"I liked you from the first," she said. "Of course, every one opened his eyes when I began to say the blessing, but I noticed particularly that



you were the only person who kept your eyes open all the time the bishop was praying, and I said to myself, 'There is an honest, independent woman, who dares to rubber any time she wants to, and I choose that woman for my best friend.' Besides," said the bride, "you look like a person who understands everything and knows beforehand all that I'm going to tell you."

"Oh, yes, indeed!" said I, in my confusion. "Not at all, not at all!"

"Well," said the bride, with a curious twinkle of childish malice, "does a divorce cost much? I've got all the Lenten money I've saved this year." Then she burst out laughing, and jumped up and sparkled over to me, and kissed me with a tiny dab of a kiss, and was back in a second on the couch, a little, vibrant mass of tinsel and gauze and tears.

"Don't you love your husband?" I asked, with impertinent, though honest, sympathy.

"Oh, yes!" she acknowledged, reluctantly, "I love him very much when he loves me, but he's too busy, most of the time, so I find him on an average rather i-n-c-o-m-p-a-t-i-b-l-e. And he's such a prude, he won't let me wear his bishop's ring, *ever*; nor dress up in his robes, nor kiss even one little finger to him in church. And he talks missions to people till I'm black in the face, and he tells the same story over and over till I'm sick unto death. And—he—*isn't*—honest!"

"Isn't honest!" I gasped, with sudden and unfeigned interest.

"No," said the bride, with horror-stricken eyes, "he—*isn't*—honest. Why, the other day, when some one asked me if I didn't consider Good Friday a very sacred day, I said of course I did, for that was the day that the bishop and I became engaged. And the bishop grew awfully red and mad, and begged Mrs. Whatever-Her-Name-Was to excuse me for my heedless inaccuracy; that I was a newcomer in the church and couldn't yet quite distinguish one Friday from another. Now, what

do you think of that? It *was* Good Friday, and, what's more, it was in the church, when everybody else had gone, and the bishop was trying to explain the Thirty-nine Articles to me. And the church was all dark and sweet and smelly, and the bishop was just too dear for anything. I don't see any objection to getting engaged on Good Friday. But the bishop is such a prude! I could forgive him everything if he wasn't such a prude. I think I could manage to stand what he says in public—'cause he's paid for that—if only he could find something exciting to say in private. But, after he's finished telling me how much he loves me, why, then there isn't anything else to say. Most men can usually kill a good deal of time telling you about their adventures, but I don't believe the bishop ever had any adventures. People say he's got a splendid future, but I must say I think he's got a mighty skimpy present, and not a single rag-tail vestige of a past. I supposed when you married a middle-aged man your evenings would be one long Arabian Nights Entertainment. But, goodness me! the bishop can't tell anything except how he baptized people at Skowhegan and buried them at Kalamazoo! Ugh! And there's no use quarreling with him, for every time I quarrel with him, he makes me kneel down and pray with him, hand in hand, and I call that an awfully dull way to make up. Horrors!"

Then, as abruptly as she came, the bishop's young wife flounced herself out of my room, and left me alone to the smoky embers of my wood fire, and the haunting, innocent fragrance of orris root and violets.

Whether the young person repented of her confidence, or whether the bishop made himself particularly attractive, I do not know; but the fact remains, that for a whole week I saw nothing of the bride except at meals, where she eyed me with complacent pleasantness, and addressed an occasional remark about the weather, or the table decorations.

The pink gown was evidently relegated to oblivion again, for the bride appeared only in solemn black gowns that were an absurdly mimic attempt at dignity and maturity.

I had almost concluded that the bride's spirit was successfully broken, when, on the eighth day, she astonished me with a great burst of attention, and an invitation.

She fluttered into my room in a mingled ecstasy of blue broadcloth and general enthusiasm, and grabbed me by the shoulders.

"You dear old thing!" she exclaimed. "Get on your bonnet and shawl, and come with us. The bishop is going out to his old home to look over a pile of books and trash that has been stored there for years and years and years. I don't want to go at all, but the bishop says it is very unseemly for a wife to show no interest in her husband's boyhood treasures, so I've got to go, but I'll be bored to death. So do be a dear, and come along to keep me company. The bishop said I could ask you!"

So, thus pitifully persuaded, I went along, after reassuring the bride a dozen times that her suit was not a bit too gay, nor her patent-leather ties too bright, nor her modest, white-clocked stockings an atom conspicuous, in spite of everything that the bishop had very evidently said to the contrary.

The bishop's old home was in a country suburb some miles remote, and the bishop enlivened every minute of the journey with so many confusing details about missions that I would gladly have contributed every cent of my fortune to the cause, and have turned back, but for the pathetic little figure by my side. She was a bewitching sight in her Spring finery, and I liked to imagine that the bishop's eyes turned sometimes in her direction; but the slyly vivacious moues with which she had at first greeted her husband's dull announcements, settled gradually into an expression of impenetrable gloom, and I could see her gay young spirits

droop perceptibly as our journey progressed.

I was pleased enough when we finally arrived at our destination, and could change the ennui of the trolley-trip for the startling red-plush splendor of a country parlor.

The bishop's relatives greeted us with austere cordiality, surveyed the bride with ill-concealed amazement, and ushered us all in due time up to the musty old attic where the bishop's treasures were stored, and left us alone to our sacrament.

First of all, we climbed up a ladder and opened the skylight, and I perched myself on a round as near the air as possible, while the bride settled herself just below me, and resigned herself to counting the polka-dots on my shirtwaist.

The bishop's task was certainly not very entertaining to us, whatever it may have been to him. He seemed to find the wildest exhilaration in diving under the eaves, and reappearing again, all dust and cobwebs, with a dirty old pile of books or pictures which he held up triumphantly to the bride's languid gaze. The bride had no possible interest in the dull mementoes, and her little, theatrical attempts at enthusiasm grew feebler and feebler, until it actually seemed to me that her pulse was weakening. The attic was very warm, and the bishop was exceedingly tiresome.

I was so sorry for the bride that I was just about to concoct a fit or a faint, when, with a burly gasp of delight, the bishop reappeared after an extra long sojourn under the eaves. His hair and shoulders were white with dust, and a long, mussy cobweb hung from one ear. His face was almost purple with delight, as he held out, with both hands, an exceptionally fat and bulky family Bible.

"See, my dear!" he exclaimed, with shining eyes, "this is the Bible I had when I was in college. Take it in your own hands, if you want to. There, be careful; are your hands quite clean?"

"My dear" reached out her little white hands, which sagged painfully

under the weight of the book, and cuddled the volume into her lap.

"Yes, my hands are quite clean," she affirmed, wearily, with no possible trace of malice. "And it seems to me a very nice Bible. I should call it a *very* nice Bible." Then, brightening: "Are there any pressed flowers in it?"

In a second, she was running her playful fingers through the pages, when suddenly, out of the Bible—and out of the years—fell a woman's black-silk stocking—a startlingly sheer and exquisitely embroidered black-silk stocking.

For the fraction of an instant, the bishop stood, white and stiff, like one turned to stone; then, with a fierce gesture, he grabbed the stocking from the floor, and squared his shoulders, in a rather ugly manner.

But the bride was too quick for him. With one wild scream of laughter, she snatched the stocking from him, and waved it aloft with one hand, while with the other she caught up her ruffled skirts, and, thus equipped, danced like a wild Indian over the attic floor. All the weariness, all the ennui, were gone like a flash from her face. Her cheeks were pink as roses, and her eyes were flashing with all the latent mischief of the world. She was like a sprite gone mad. Round and round the room she whirled, mocking the bishop, and waving her trophy in his face.

"Oh, you sly old dog!" she screamed, with delight. "Who would ever have suspected it? I was looking for pressed posies, and I found wild oats. Who ever heard of pressing wild oats in the family Bible? Who was she?" she gasped, as she dodged behind the chimney, with the bishop after her, "and what theatre did she play at?" she giggled, as she jumped over a trunk, and just evaded the bishop's infuriated fingers. "And did she have only *one*—stocking?" she queried, sympathetically, from the top of a barrel; "and could she kick as high as *this*?" she illustrated, on one of the lower rafters. "And did you love her as much as you do me?" she gasped, as she tripped on a box, and fell with her

ankle under her, into the bishop's angry arms.

I think things would have gone pretty hard with the bishop's young wife if she had not fainted and looked so dead. Indeed, I assured the bishop that she was quite dead, and together we tenderly carried her little body down the attic stairs to the red-plush sofa, where I laid her out as consistently as I could with her rapidly returning consciousness.

"Love *may* be able to save her," I volunteered, with smug complacency; and I must say, to give him all credit, that the bishop certainly did everything that ignorant love can do in the way of restoratives. He was sincerely frightened—there is no doubt about that. It is an awful thing to see a person you love smitten down in the height of your anger. And, in his way, I think the bishop really did love his young wife.

But with her first sensible remark I packed the bishop out of the room, and I distinctly heard him go up the attic stairs and poke around, as though he were looking for something. I would give dollars to know whether the search was one of sentiment or outraged decency. But I do know that he never found the stocking.

But that was all a year ago, and the black-silk stocking is still in my possession, together with all my unsatisfied curiosity regarding the bishop's crop of wild oats.

What the bishop's young wife may have gleaned in the way of information, I do not know; but I understand, from various sources, that the young lady in question rules her august husband with a rod of iron—or a thread of silk, if you like the metaphor better—and that the bishop on no account whatever talks missions ever again at purely social functions. And, further, I hear on unimpeachable authority, that the bishop's young wife now tours the whole missionary circuit, adorned like Solomon in all his glory.

For which dispensations of Providence, I hereby credit the bishop's "Harvest-Home."

## THE FALL OF A FEATHER

ONCE a feather from an eagle  
 Drifted to the ground;  
 And it had the gladdest fancies  
 As it floated 'round.

"I shall let a poet use me  
 For a pen, to write  
 All the glowing, gleaming visions  
 Of his spirit bright.

"All the eagle saw in flying  
 In the heights above,  
 All the poet's heart hath imaged  
 In his youth and love,

"I shall write it," said the feather,  
 "Bring him fame and luster!"  
 But the housemaid found it first,  
 And now it's in a duster!

BETTIE R. COCKE.



## THERE ARE OTHERS

BIBBS—Fizzles seems to think that he could run the universe.  
 GIBBS—That's natural. He has failed at everything else.



## VICE VERSA

I NEVER see my rector's eyes—  
 He hides their light divine;  
 For, when he prays, he shuts his own,  
 And, when he preaches, mine!

G. M. FERCESS.



ARTHUR—Miss Gayleigh is a girl you can't tell much about, eh?  
 JACK—No, not without implicating myself.

# IN THE VERY BEST SOCIETY

By Alfred Sutro

MISS TERELLION was very surprised, as she tripped into the hall, to find Mr. Vandeveldt sitting in front of the fire. "What!" she said, "you've not gone shooting?"

He rose, and wheeled up a chair for her. "No. When they called me, I heard the pattering of the rain, and my soul protested against another day's tramp over sticky turnips. *You* are up very early."

"A matter of habit!" she answered, gaily. "At home, we have breakfast at eight."

"Eight! And you actually attend the function?"

"Oh, yes! Father would be fearfully indignant, if I didn't. Of course, we go to bed earlier than one does here. But I've been up for more than an hour."

"And how, may I ask, have you employed those pleasant minutes?"

"I've been to see Lady Miltringham; but she's busy writing letters."

"Lady Miltringham has an enormous correspondence. Young people with yearning souls write to her, and she—answers, which is wonderful."

"Why?"

"Why? Ah, of course, you belong to the angels. How long have you known our hostess?"

"She's an old friend of my mother's—but we very rarely see her."

"Lady Miltringham is a very extraordinary woman. Have you ever read Madame de Maintenon's letters?"

Dora cast down her eyes. "No."

"History," continued Mr. Vandeveldt, blandly, "has done that illus-

trious lady an injustice. I see you do, too. She was married, *bel et bien* married, to King Louis."

Miss Terellion was embarrassed. "I didn't—" she began.

He interrupted her. "Pardon me, you did. Louis XIV.'s court was a trifle—modern, and Madame de Maintenon spent heaven knows how many years there; yet, she is not reported to have been prudish, or over-inclined to blame. But she herself cared little for the—lighter side of life; her favorite occupation was teaching the young, and caring for her soul, and other people's souls, wherein she was not altogether unlike our esteemed and charming hostess."

"Lady Miltringham is very good, I know."

"We, her friends," continued Mr. Vandeveldt, "or, rather, her husband's friends—for you are the first of her own circle whom I have been privileged to meet—we, her husband's friends, are a foolish and frivolous crew. And she moves serenely among us, like a—what?"

"How should I know?" laughed the girl.

"Similes are elusive in the early morning. They do not thrive on coffee. Let us say like a majestic Cunarder on the stormy Atlantic; or, if you prefer it, as a policeman among Hooligans. The banal comparison would be to a nun in a ballet."

"You *are* a strange person!" said Miss Terellion.

He bowed. "I am. You behold in me an instance of misapplied heredity. My grandfather was an ener-



getic Dutchman, who emigrated to America; my father built railways and discovered mines; and I, his degenerate offspring, am merely a phlegmatic philanderer."

The girl stared. "What is that?"

"Miss Terellion, a small boy puzzled Confucius very much, a few thousand years ago, by asking him questions. The sage could only pluck at his beard, and murmur, 'I wonder!' But, to return to our hostess: have you seen her with her children?"

"Of course."

"The mere simplicity of that answer abashes me. You, naturally, are like her, being her friend. In the garden, one day, little Gerald was stung by a wasp. Lady Miltringham caught him up in her arms; and she looked like a Madonna."

"You admire her?"

"I admire her—vaguely. To the Scotchman, I am told, champagne is merely a curious French mineral water. I am too young to be good. Don't laugh, please—I am only forty. How old are you?"

"Oh!"

"Twenty-two, I should say," continued Mr. Vandeveldt, imperturbably. "You have never painted your face, and your hair curls naturally. That is a possession more priceless than rubies. You have remarkable taste in dress, and the smallest hands I have ever seen in so tall a woman."

The girl blushed, uncomfortably. "Mr. Vandeveldt!"

"Forgive me; I forgot that you were a dean's daughter. My conversation, I fear, is not strictly decanal. What are the subjects you permit your admirers to discuss with you?"

Miss Terellion colored again. "Tell me about the people here," she said.

"When you go to the Riviera nowadays," began Mr. Vandeveldt, "you take the train *de luxe*, which is a little faster than the ordinary express. Our society here, at present, is only the ordinary express."

She shook her head. "I don't understand!"

"And I find it difficult to explain. Lord Miltringham, having read in a good book that life is uncertain, regards it as his duty to eat, drink, and be merry. He surrounds himself, therefore, with congenial spirits, like myself, who have the same predilection. Our pace is fast, wherefore the comparison to the express. But the vertiginous ones, who travel seventy miles an hour, have been excluded—probably out of consideration for your demure ladyship."

"This is all very strange to me."

"Naturally. Should you wish to be Dante, and explore these higher regions, I shall gladly officiate as your Virgil."

"But if Lady Miltringham—doesn't—like these people, why does she invite them?"

"Marriage is a compromise," remarked Mr. Vandeveldt; "a word that comes from the Spanish, '*compromiso*,' which means a mistake. Nature—the first mistake—insists on our committing others. The wise person makes the best of things. Lady Miltringham does."

"Do you mean that she——?"

"Even a dean's daughter must have detected the unsuitableness of the couple. Lady Miltringham spends six months in the year with her husband and *his* friends; the other six with her children, and respectable persons like yourself."

"And Lord Miltringham?"

"Spends *all* the year with his friends."

"Persons—like you?"

He smiled at her archness. "Like me. What do you think of me?"

"Oh, what a question!"

"A very natural one. I have no objection to saying what I think of you."

She flashed a quick glance at him, and rose. "I would rather not, thank you!" she said, shyly. "And I think that I——"

"Oh, please sit down!" begged Mr. Vandeveldt. "I'll promise to say nothing about your exquisite hair, or those very wonderful eyes of yours,

which you persist in wasting upon the floor. Sit down, Miss Terellion, please. I will be good."

"Tell me about Lady Torcastle, then," said the girl, "and I'll give you five minutes."

"I can exhaust her in as many seconds. But does she interest you?"

"She puzzles me; that's all."

"St. Peter will be no less puzzled," declared Mr. Vandeveldt. "She is a person who acts with the best of motives."

"What *do* you mean?"

"Only that Lady Torcastle has all the virtues, but—misapplies them. She is exceedingly generous—but she gives away the wrong thing; exceedingly loyal—but not to the right person; exceedingly truthful—but with a very bad memory. And so on. It is a mere matter of shifting the labels."

"Why is her husband not with her?"

He laughed. "Please remember what I told you about Confucius. I suppose, where you come from, husbands and wives are always together?"

"Of course."

"I think Mr. Carnegie had better pepper the world with cathedrals, then, instead of libraries, if that is the result. Have you ever been in love, Miss Terellion?"

"Oh!" she said. "Now, really, I'll go!"

"Dear me!" he cried; "I forgot—I did, indeed! But it's such an ordinary question! You haven't, of course, I see. And you're twenty-two. How wonderful!"

Miss Terellion laughed. "Mr. Vandeveldt," she said, "if it should rain to-morrow morning——"

"You won't come down?"

"I'll bring one of my father's sermons with me!" And she turned, and ran lightly up the stairs.

Mr. Vandeveldt's eyes followed her till she was out of sight; then he took a cigarette from his case, lighted it, and smoked, staring into the fire. Suddenly he flung the cigarette away, snapped his fingers, and walked briskly up the stairs and along the

corridor till he came to the door of Lady Miltringham's boudoir. He knocked. "Come in!" said a voice. He entered.

Lady Miltringham looked up from her letters. "Oh, this is against the rules!" she cried. "You know that I'm not to be disturbed before luncheon!"

"Mona, I want a talk—and, hang it, when can one get hold of you? Forget the Medes and Persians for once; be a good girl, and give me ten minutes."

Lady Miltringham passed her hand through a pile of papers. "Look at all these! Two days' accumulation! How shall I ever get through them?"

Mr. Vandeveldt sat on the sofa, and crossed one leg over the other. "Our first duty is to those who are nearest," he said. "I want you to ask Miss Terellion whether she will marry me."

Lady Miltringham started. "What! You're not serious? Dora!"

He nodded. "Dora. Of course, I've seen her only for a couple of days, but I like her, and think she'll do. Put it to her—will you?"

Lady Miltringham frowned. "If this is a joke, it is not in the best of taste."

"It's not a joke, Mona. 'The god, with his arrow, has pierced my marrow.' I like her, and I wish to marry. I do!"

"You have certainly taken me by surprise," said Lady Miltringham, quietly. "But why come to me? Why not tell Dora, yourself?"

"There my native virtue steps in. She's your friend, and protégée, and that sort of thing; and you know quite a lot about me. There are things that a man can't tell a girl, but a woman can."

"You wish me to enlighten Dora?"

"Please! I give you *carte-blanc*. I like her—that's solid fact. As to whether I shall make her happy is, of course, quite another affair."

"Quite!" assented Lady Miltringham, gravely.

"The main point," he went on, "can be answered satisfactorily. I

suppose I am one of the wealthiest men in town."

"And one of the wickedest!"

He laughed. "I ain't moral!" he said, whimsically. "But then, how can one be, when he's very good-looking and very rich?"

She gazed critically at him, at his olive skin, black hair and eyes, and full, red lips. "I suppose you *are* good-looking," she said, slowly. "I know most women think so."

"Don't depreciate me, Mona! You, of course, are one of my failures. I was in love with you once for nearly a year!"

"You did me too much honor. You mercifully spared me the information."

"My improvement dated from then. And I shall have much satisfaction in leading a friend of yours to the altar."

"This is really serious? You mean to marry? Whom is it you wish to spite?"

"To spite! My dear Mona! I am fond of Dora."

"She's a novelty to you, because she blushes, and is unlike the others. Do you wish to know about her?"

"Not a bit. I fancy I understand her. She'll just do for me."

"Of course, if you're sure of that——"

"Quite. She is a dean's daughter—deans are dull, and cathedral cities not exactly hotbeds of gaiety. The little lady has taken very kindly to our life here. It is true that you have somewhat Bowdlerized our ways since she came. We are an expurgated edition. But I rather like it."

"And yet, you were very indignant that I wouldn't have Betty——"

"Yes. Only shows that we never know what is good for us. I have forgotten Betty's existence. Her husband takes good care to remind me, though."

An expression of disgust passed over Lady Miltringham's face. "I suppose he is disconsolate!"

"I had a wire from him this morning," chuckled Mr. Vandeveldt. "He has come the usual cropper. But

Betty belongs to my sinful past. I am a reformed character."

"For how long?"

"My dear Mona, I'm in love. If little Dora will have me—and I think she will—I shall be quite pleased. I was very near asking her just now—she did look so diabolically pretty—but I thought it wouldn't be fair. I have always played the game."

"You make your own rules! Don't forget that your wife and I were friends—and she confided in me."

"I know!" he said, cheerfully. "I was a shocking husband. But poor Alice died five years ago, and I may have improved. I've just turned forty—the age of wisdom!"

"And how much am I to tell the girl?"

He made a large gesture. "All! I demand no reticence. Be as frank as you like. She's an innocent, shy little thing; it's only once in a while that she can be got to lift those eyes of hers—but the look is worth waiting for. Oh, it's love, right enough! I had thought innocence had gone out with ping-pong, but I suppose that in deaneries they keep it preserved on ice."

"What will Betty say when she hears of it?"

"I shall send her some diamonds. Diamonds are the wreath one lays on the coffin of—that sort of thing. Besides, Betty will soon be consoled."

"If this girl accepts you, will you treat her kindly?"

He laughed. "I'll do what I can. There never was a man with better intentions than I. And who knows whether she may not change me? You used to talk to me of what you called 'higher things.' Well, she may show me the way."

Lady Miltringham gave a long look at him. "We've known each other a good many years, you and I; and I can't say that I've found very much to respect in you."

He heaved a mock sigh. "Remember the rejoicing in heaven when the sinner repenteth!"

She was grave. "If all Alice told me was true——"

"It probably was. She hadn't imagination enough to invent things, poor dear!"

"In that case, you are as cruel a man as ever lived."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Men and women are always calling one another cruel. Put it that one person is sensitive, and the other not. Alice had no temperament."

"And you think that Dora——?"

"Dora is a little snowdrop that I shall melt, and turn into an orchid. The metaphor's mixed, I allow, but you know what I mean. Alice had no idea of the sort of man I was, wherefore she expected too much. But you will have enlightened Dora—and painted me in colors so black that she will always be discovering virtues."

"Has it occurred to you that your history is scarcely one that can be told to a girl?"

"There is some truth in that, of course; you'll have to water the wine a good deal before you allow her to drink it. The point is that she should have some idea of the flavor."

"I suppose you think that this—vicarious confession—is rather noble in you?"

"My dear Mona, don't be priggish! You're a saint, of course; but your husband—isn't. You bear up remarkably well. Miltringham's still engaged in sowing wild oats, but there must have been quite a respectable crop before he married. Well, you ought to have known the kind of man he was. I don't suppose any one told you. There Dora will have the advantage."

"Her mother is a very old friend of mine," mused Lady Miltringham. "I reproach myself for having allowed you to remain."

"Mothers are strangely forgiving when the sinner's rich. Besides, you did your best! You tried hard to evict me, but I wouldn't go. And who knows whether you don't a trifle—exaggerate—my shortcomings? At any rate, I can plead extenuating circumstances. I'm like the others now, I

suppose; but I was an innocent young American when I came over—virgin sealing-wax, let us say, on which the magnificent Briton made his impression. I was admitted into a set where I found a certain standard of conduct ruling. It seemed pleasant to me, and I made it my own. I am not aware whether you gave my wife confidence for confidence; but, in that case, I fancy your story would have been very much the same."

"We need scarcely discuss my affairs. That is not the point. I do not pretend to have a high opinion of my husband's friends."

"Or of your husband?"

Lady Miltringham turned haughtily away. "You had better send Dora to me."

But he did not move. "I repeat," he said, cheerfully, "or your husband? It is no use to frown at me. If I was cruel to Alice, your husband has been no less cruel to you."

Lady Miltringham rose. "It is not the first time, Mr. Vandeveldt, that you have adopted this tone with me. I believe that many women appreciate a certain studied insolence. Permit me to remind you that I am not of their number; and it will be well for our future relations if I have not to remind you again."

Mr. Vandeveldt bowed his head, meekly. "I am the most unfortunate of men! Truly, I had no desire to offend. The other ladies in this set of yours, to which I have the privilege to belong, are so—different, that one forgets. I beg you to forgive me. Besides, you have entirely misunderstood me. Insolence! Good heavens, nothing was further from my thoughts. I merely wished to point out——"

"We need say no more," interrupted Lady Miltringham. "Had I, as you are good enough to suggest, cause of complaint against my husband, that would in no way alter my opinion of the way in which you treated my poor friend. And let me add that there are men who err through weakness, and others who love what is bad for its own sake."

He chuckled. "What a reflection on Dora, when I tell you I am fond of her! I am *un homme incompris*. The world is censorious, but I expected to find you sympathetic! I will send the little lady to you. I leave my character in your hands." And he strolled blithely to the door.

Lady Miltringham shook her head, and sighed wearily; she went to her desk, and tried to read through what she had written. Then she took up her pen, but did not write, and sat there, thinking, till a knock came at the door, and Dora burst into the room.

"Oh, Lady Miltringham!" she cried, "does he mean to propose?"

Lady Miltringham looked curiously at her. "Yes, he means to propose. So, you knew?"

The girl laughed, merrily. "I had my suspicions! Oh, what luck! I scarcely dared to believe——"

"You are fond of him?"

"Oh, yes! I've never met any one like him. He's perfectly splendid!"

"It's rather sudden, isn't it? You've known him only three days, and I understood there was a man in town——"

"Oh, mother told you that?"

"Yes," replied Lady Miltringham, shortly.

Dora's cheeks were very red. There was a moment's silence. Then, she spoke, with her eyes fixed on the ground.

"Our life at home is so dull, you know—oh, fearfully dull!—and they make me teach Sunday school, and all that, and father's absurdly strict and old-fashioned. There was a man I used to meet—he had come down for the Summer—and he fell in love, and I—liked him. He was a poet, and that was a change."

"And you wished to marry him?"

Dora laughed. "I believe I did, for a bit! He was very clever, you know, and he talked very prettily, and brought me verses. But father said his books were irreligious; and he had no money. Oh, was *that* why you asked me here?"

Lady Miltringham nodded. "Your mother seemed to think you were broken-hearted—that a change would do you good."

"Poor mother! I *was* rather upset! He's quite wonderful, too, in his way; but poetry doesn't sell, and he's up to his ears in debt. He wanted me to elope! I was very near doing it, too, at one time. He has beautiful, blue-gray eyes, and a voice like music. But I don't wish to be poor. How awfully good of you to let me come, Lady Miltringham!"

"What was his name?"

"Heronfield—Clarence Heronfield. Have you read anything of his?"

Lady Miltringham reflected. "Yes; he's a mystic, isn't he?"

"I suppose so. I could never understand half what he said. And you should see the letters he writes!"

"Writes? Then it's not broken off?"

"Well, of course, he knows we can't marry, but that's no reason why we shouldn't be friends. Oh, Lady Miltringham, can it really be true about Mr. Vandeveldt?"

"You have played your cards very well," said Lady Miltringham, slowly. "He thinks you one of the shyest, most innocent creatures alive."

Dora smiled, and blushed. "I am not used to men like him. And he has a way of—looking at one. But he's awfully handsome, and the most fascinating man I've met. He's very rich, isn't he?"

"Something like fifty thousand a year, I believe."

The girl drew a deep breath. "Fifty thousand! Good heavens!"

"He has asked me to tell you about him. Won't you sit down? How do you like the sort of life here?"

"Lovely! No prayers, and no 'ideals'! Oh, I had no conception of it! I've never been half so happy!"

"Not with your friend, the poet?"

"He was always talking of art. And, of course, I know nothing of art. But I liked to hear him. Mr. Vandeveldt's an old friend of yours, isn't he?"

"Of my husband's. I used to be very fond of his wife."



"Wife! Has he been married?"

"Yes; he is a widower. His wife died, and, although the doctors tell us that no such malady exists, she died of a broken heart."

"Lady Miltringham!"

"She adored him, you see; and he—was always running after other women. She had only one child, and that died; she had nothing left to live for, and she died, too."

Dora was staring vaguely before her. Lady Miltringham paused for a moment, and then went on:

"He is a very cruel man. He almost seems to delight in giving pain. His bringing-up, of course, may be largely responsible for this. He was the only son of a great mine-owner and contractor in America, and when he was sixteen his father engaged the fastest and shadiest man he could find as tutor for the boy, with instructions to show him all the dark side of life, to make him acquainted with every form of wickedness and swindling, so that he should know how to guard his money. Now one of his favorite, and most innocent, forms of amusement is rooking the professional poker-sharps on the Atlantic liners."

Dora laughed. "How clever of him!"

Lady Miltringham looked sharply at her. "He is very clever—there is no doubt of that. But he has no moral side—absolutely none. He looks on life with mere scorn and derision. And I have never met a man who thought so meanly of women. His wife, poor thing, used to come and tell me; and it was very awful. She loved him, you see! The very night she died—he was not with her."

"Oh!"

"The truth is that he has no heart and no feeling. I have heard of kind things he has done to men. I believe he is straight—in his way. He likes to 'play the game,' as he calls it. For instance, his insisting that I should tell you about him——"

"That was generous."

"It was defiant, too. You see, he is not ashamed! And, were you to be

foolish enough to marry him—as soon as the freshness wore off he would treat you as he treated her. He could not help it."

Dora tossed her head. "I am not—in love with Mr. Vandeveldt. I told you of a curious look in his eyes that I didn't like. I see now what it meant. And I don't think he'll break *my* heart!"

"Then you mean to accept him?"

"Of course! You see, Lady Miltringham," the girl went on, volubly, "I want to get married, and I want to be rich. At home I've no sort of chance. The people around me are—well, what I suppose they always are in cathedral cities; my two sisters have married curates, and I'd do anything to escape that. It has been quite a revelation to me, down here—I never thought life could be so splendid. I've enjoyed myself amazingly. Of course, I quite understand that, in a circle like this, people don't marry exactly for love, and that the husbands will go their own way. But, then, I suppose the wife has a certain amount of freedom, too."

Lady Miltringham stared. "I don't quite understand you."

"Oh, I mean nothing wrong!" laughed Dora. "Only, the humdrum bores me—I have had such a lot of it! There's my sister Mary, in a tiny house, with just two servants, and hard work from morning till night. Well, that wouldn't suit me, at all! I think the people here are awfully jolly. They all seem so happy! They're not good, perhaps, in the way they are at home; but, then, I often wonder whether we don't overrate that sort of goodness. After all, in what you've said about Mr. Vandeveldt, he seems to have been only—very flighty."

"I confess that you somewhat surprise me," said Lady Miltringham, slowly, "and that these are not precisely the sentiments I should have expected from you. But, then, you will forgive my saying that you speak rather in ignorance; you have seen the surface of life, and you imagine that you know all. You tell yourself that, if

you married Mr. Vandeveldt, you would go your own way, and he his. That is an error. He would go his way; and you would spend your life, or at least many years of it, in helpless misery, chained to a man you despised."

Dora toyed with her rings. "I am not sure that I have very much heart, myself. I don't think I should be as unhappy as you imagine."

"You have had a flirtation with this—Mr. Heronfield, and you think you are very callous because it has left you cold. You think you have the wisdom of the serpent, because you have inspired a feeling in Mr. Vandeveldt that you at present do not share, or share very slightly. You have probably read books that depicted love as merely a kind of wild passion, and you

fancy that you know life; whereas, the truth is, of course, that you have no conception of it. A woman really begins to live when her first child is born—and it is when she is a mother that she knows what it means to love."

"Children must be a great nuisance," reflected Dora. "I shall always pray that I may have none."

Lady Miltringham raised her eyebrows; she went to her desk, sat down, and took up her letters.

"You will probably find Mr. Vandeveldt waiting for you in the hall," she said, over her shoulder. "I am inclined to think you will suit each other very well."

She dipped her pen in the ink, and began to write. Dora, after a moment's hesitation, quietly left the room.



## WAY O' LOVE

"**L**OVE finds a way," so runs the time-worn saying;  
 So, when that little naked god goes straying  
 Within the sacred precincts of the heart,  
 Therein to practise well his subtle art,  
 'Twere best to capture and to closely bind him;  
 Lest, when the morrow dawns, one cannot find him.  
 For the sly rascal knows his way about,  
 And where he can steal in, he can steal out!

BEATRICE E. RICE.



## CURIOUS TO KNOW

**M**ISS ELDERLY—I was engaged to him at one time.  
**THE FRIEND**—How did he get out of marrying you?



**W**OMAN'S sphere, in spite of all her apologists may say, is at the best but a hemisphere.

## BELLA'S WATERLOO

By Gelett Burgess

BELLA lived in Boston—ever been in Boston?  
Crooked little city, with a lofty, mental air;  
Classic, intellectual—therefore I expect you all  
To show a just astonishment at hearing of her there!  
Bella captured Willy, got him good and silly,  
Used a little trick or two (Bella's eyes were brown),  
Broke his heart in pieces—here the chapter ceases—  
Will left town.

Bella moved to Rochester—ever been to Rochester?  
Peaceful little city, you have heard of it before;  
Flat, and rather pretty; quite a charming city—  
Half-a-dozen millionaires, and clever men galore.  
Bella met a man, his name was Bob McCann,  
She flattered him and worked him, in a stunning Paris gown.  
Bob McCann proposed. Now the story's closed—  
Bob left town.

Bella in Chicago—ever seen Chicago?  
It's windy as they say it is; bustle, dollars, noise!  
Wheat was going higher, Bella took a flyer,  
Bella got to going with a crowd of speedy boys.  
Jimmy often called on her, but his visits palled on her;  
He actually raved about her, getting but her frown!  
When he gave her trouble, Bella pricked the bubble—  
Jim left town.

Bella went to 'Frisco—ever lived in 'Frisco?  
A week of it is equal to a decade in the East!  
Full of zip and scramble, all the people gamble;  
Everybody's rather gay, or say they are, at least.  
Bella met a broker (a Mr. Smith) at poker;  
He went dotty like the rest, till Bella turned him down.  
Heavens! what a scene with him—she was rather mean with him!—  
Smith left town.

Bella in New Orleans—sultry place, New Orleans,  
(Accent on the "Or," you know, the way they say it there).  
On the creole galleries men with paltry salaries  
Love and flirt the Summer through, and no one seems to care.  
Bella met a doctor, but his ardor shocked her,  
He said he *had* to have her, or he'd go away and drown;  
When he got too fervent, Bella called a servant—  
"Doc" left town.

Bella in New York—'course you know New York!  
 Tense, excited atmosphere, elevated trains,  
 Everybody flurried, everybody hurried,  
 Literature and business, pulchritude and brains.  
 Bella met a poet—how the two did go it!  
 He wrote her vagous verses, and he acted like a clown.  
 Then, like all the others of her new-made brothers,  
 Poet left town.

Bella's back in Boston—dear old quiet Boston!  
 Quieter than ever, now that Bella's thirty-five!  
 Bella's life was chequered, but she broke her record  
 When, at last, she met "the very dearest man alive."  
 All her arts and graces were put through all their paces;  
 But alas! for Bella now was queen without a crown!  
 He, alone of all of them, simply wouldn't follow them—  
 Bella left town!



## THE DIRECTORY OF A BLUESTOCKING

TO the Public.....Margaret Genevieve Pennchaser, Author of  
 "Souls at Rest."  
 To the Publisher.....Our valued author.  
 Proud Father.....My daughter, Margie.  
 Mother.....Dear Margaret.  
 Fiancé.....Sweetheart.  
 Mrs. Ima Snob.....Our dear friend, Margaret Pennchaser.  
 Mrs. Tufthunter.....Miss Pennchaser, the writer, you know.  
 Sister-in-law.....Thithter Mawgie.  
 Envious Rival.....Poor, dear Maggie.  
 Big Brother.....Sis.  
 Little Brother.....Peg.  
 Sister.....Puggy.  
 Close Friend.....Peggy.  
 Cook.....Miss Margaret.  
 Woman in the flat below.....That woman who pounds the type-writer all  
 the time.  
 Bitter enemy.....Mag.



## A LONG, BUT ACCURATE, SHOT

"PA, what are ancestors?"  
 "Ancestors, my son, are people who give you the gout."



TALES of the woolly West are usually yarns.

# THE JOINT-STOCKING OF WALMERS

By Charles M. Skinner

WHEN the sky fell upon George Walmers, he uttered a shrill peep, and tried to fall upon the neck of Mr. Mortimer Perkins, who had pulled it down. Mr. Perkins stepped back in alarm, for he was an American, and to one of this land, the idea of being kissed by an adult of the same sex is appalling, even when one sets aside the awful fact that the intending culprit has been eating onions, or Brie cheese. So Walmers caromed off and fell on the sofa, instead. People of a less emotional nature than Walmers would have gone partly daft, under the like circumstances, for it was the first time that the sky had ever fallen on him, and it was made of twenty-dollar bills.

After several frantic attempts to calm himself, each attempt concluding in a shout of triumph, he desired Mr. Perkins to go out in his company and pickle his system in wine—a proposition which caused that gentleman to start back again, and spread his hands in appeal before the glad and shining orbs of Walmers. “Oh, don’t do that, just as you are getting where you can work,” he pleaded.

“Work!” screamed Walmers. “Work! Do you suppose it’s possible for a person who is weltering in opulence to work? Did you ever have more money showered on you at once than you had made before in all your life, and, if you did, were you expected to spoil the effect by working?”

“Now, see here, Walmers; you told me that if you could only see a way out of your difficulties you would be able to knuckle down to business, and——”

“Stop, right there, please. Don’t use that word business on an occasion of this kind. Say it to-morrow, if you have to, but, for heaven’s sake, don’t turn a combined Christmas, Thanksgiving and Fourth of July into a Good Friday of sackclothes and frankfurters.”

“Well,” sighed Mr. Perkins, “if you are hungry, that’s another matter.” Then, with a sly twinkle, “I’ll go out with you to Bennett’s and have some bread and milk, or some toast and tea, if you insist.”

Walmers gasped, turned the eye of astonishment on his patron, and echoed, “Tea!” in notes of pain.

“It’s better for you than wine, Walmers.”

“But it doesn’t express my feelings. I’ve got to have my feelings expressed, or I can’t work. Art is feeling. I find in dinner the same expression of feeling that I find in a picture. Therefore, a dinner is art. How can you object to it?”

“I don’t know,” replied Mr. Perkins, vaguely, for, in truth, he did not object to dinner himself, “yet, I think it would be a most inopportune inauguration of your new fortunes to indulge in alcoholic beverages at this time.”

“Now, see here, friend Perkins; if you had not had a drink for nearly ten months—at least, nothing but the claret they serve with the thirty-five-cent table d’hôte around at Otero’s”—here Walmers shuddered—“would you go to a milkery, and have tea? Perish the thought!” Walmers took a few rapid turns around his studio, which was not a large room, and could, there-



fore, be circumambulated several times in about as many seconds, and, having in that way relieved the pressure, fell into a chair, against which he had bumped, and was busy for a minute rubbing his shin. "Tell me how it all happened," he grunted.

Mr. Perkins spread the tails of his correct-looking broadcloth, and took a seat, rather gingerly, having first looked at the chair for evidences of paint, oil, sandwiches, turpentine, rags, brushes and other bric-à-brac that it is the habit of artists to strew with rich wantonness over their premises. Finding no interruptions to the adjustment of his anatomy, he adjusted it, and began: "Well, I've merely done what I told you I should try to do last Winter; I've joint-stocked you."

"You've which?"

"I've turned you into the working plant of a joint-stock company. I've capitalized you."

The idea of being related to capital, even in the capacity of an asset, was so delicious that Walmers chuckled; the chuckle grew into a laugh, and he hugged himself with a side-to-side wriggle of joy.

"While there has been no actual printing of scrip," continued Mr. Perkins, "there is an equal interest in your progress and welfare. The capital is to be paid in by four other fellows in the stationery business, and myself. You have twenty per cent. of it now in your possession."

"I do all the work, and get only a fifth of the proceeds?"

"This is a temporary arrangement. We could have called it a loan, but we refused to hurt your feelings. We hold an interest in futures, you might say, rather than in produce that is in sight. Other advances will be made, from time to time, as may be deemed judicious, until you have drawn to the full amount of five thousand dollars. We are pledged to use our best efforts to get your pictures seen, exhibited and sold, to drum up custom for you, and make you famous. I've blown a loud trumpet for you, so you mustn't fail

to bring the show up to the announcement. After all is smooth going, you can paint a little picture for each of us, by way of dividend, or interest; we will repay ourselves from the sales, acting as your agents, and there you are."

"I wish I was."

"But you have a thousand in hand at this moment."

"Egad, so I have." Walmers contemplated the money with new admiration, then, grasping it in both hands, he flung it at the ceiling, and stood under it, so that the bills would rain on his head. To have a green sky fall on you is a delightful experience.

"Ah, but this is joy, this is life, this is art!" cried the painter, catching some of the bills, as they floated down, flinging them up again, then eagerly scrambling over the floor and collecting them, for he remembered that a window was open. "My dear Perkins, my adored Perkins, my friend and benefactor, you must dine with me. Telephone to your wife that you won't be home till to-morrow, and come with me to Martini's, then to the opera, then to Burbidge's for oysters and rabbits and beer and cigars, then to—oh, anywhere."

Mr. Perkins sighed, yet it was not the sigh of one who utterly despairs. Martini's cooking was of the best, and he had eaten Burbidge's rabbits. He compromised with his prospects and his conscience by agreeing to dine with Walmers, who was to be moderate in his expenditures, and was to return to his lodging—a couch behind the screen in his studio—at ten o'clock. With this understanding they went out, Walmers in high feather, Mr. Perkins cheerfully resigned, and various of the twenty-dollar notes hidden in books, in a clock, in a paint-box, on the ledge above a window; though, for that matter, it would have been safe on the floor—at least, if the possible burglar had enjoyed Mr. Walmers's acquaintance for any considerable period prior to this irruption of prosperity. The artist wanted to carry it all in his pocket for one

evening, that he might handle the proofs of affluence, but from this project he was wisely dissuaded. And so they went to Martini's.

It was a good dinner, though there was a difference of view between Perkins and Walmers as to what constituted moderation. Walmers was admiring, buoyant, witty, hopeful, hungry and appreciative. The talk, the cigars, and the artist's passionate yearning to paint portraits of the handsomely gownned women in the place, several of whom he sketched on his cuffs, and then kissed the cuffs, kept them at the table till nine o'clock or so, and, as they emerged from the restaurant, pulling at fresh perfectos, Walmers was stronger of voice and had grown taller and larger around the chest.

After their sixth good night, the capitalist tore himself away, jumped upon a car that was clanging uptown, and disappeared with a wave of the hand, which was answered by a yell of gratitude and a tossing of Walmers's hat twenty feet into the air, where it was caught by a gust, and thrown upon the head of an astonished and displeased old gentleman who was coming around the corner, and who proved to be one of the artist's creditors. The old man gave up the hat with a sharp look and a set of the teeth that would have boded ill to the painter's peace of mind—once; but Walmers uttered a laugh of defiance, thanked the rescuer of his head-piece with satirical politeness, and swaggered away in a cloud of smoke.

On the following day, Mr. Perkins ran in to see how the Works were getting along, and to encourage that department of the syndicate to fresh and fame-creating struggles. Walmers was seated in a drowsy attitude before a canvas on which he had made rude scrawls in charcoal. He sprang up when his patron and partner entered, in response to a "Come in!" and clasped him by both hands. "Ah, it's a joy to look at you!" he cried.

"You look a little sleepy," ventured Mr. Perkins; "what time did you get in?"

"Eh?" queried Walmers, in a puzzled tone.

"What time did you reach home?"

"Reach home? Why—er—the fact is, I didn't. Oh, yes, I'm here now, but I met—let's see: there was Milledge, and Somers, and Short, and four or five of the fellows I studied with at the League, and I—I took them around to the Waldorf-Astoria, and—and—we had a few—and I stayed there."

Mr. Perkins's legs seemed to grow weak, and he fell into a chair. "All night?" he gasped.

"Sure! I had the price, you know. I've always wanted to be able to say that I once stopped in a first-class hotel, and now I can say it. Then"—he laughed, boyishly—"to think I should be asleep till morning, and get no good of it! Next time——"

"Don't let there be a next time, old man. Consider your work."

"I was considering it, when you came in. It's going to be a beaut, too."

"Is that—the—subject?" asked Mr. Perkins, putting on his glasses.

"That's the start." Walmers laughed. "Did you think it was the picture? No, I'm not so far gone in impressionism as all that. It isn't even blocked in. What you see is just the arrangement of masses in the composition. Yes, it's to be 'The Genius of America Urging Washington to the Field.' Here will be Washington; here's the Genius——"

"A portrait of yourself?"

"Of—oh, say, but that's too good! You must take dinner with me this evening."

"No!" cried Mr. Perkins, in alarm; "not two nights in succession. Be moderate; do remember the syndicate, if you don't remember yourself."

Walmers sighed, and looked downcast.

"There, there! go on about the picture."

"I only wish—well, here will be a

line of Colonial troops, with a battery of field guns at this point, some tents here, a sentinel up there against the cloud, a hint of red-coats down in the valley at the left; just here, above the centre, a big eagle sweeping past, and here a woman holding a sword twined with bays. Kind of good idea, don't you think?"

"Great! They'll put it on the backs of hundred-dollar bills."

"Will they—honest?" asked Walmers, gleefully. "In that case, I hope the Government will give a few samples to the designer."

"I suppose you'll get at it directly."

"I'm at it now. Going to treat the subject in a decorative way—rather flat tints, not much shade or perspective; slathers of color in the uniforms, sashes, flags, guidons, rifles, ribbons, flowers—all that sort of thing. If they don't use it for bank notes, I suppose it ought to go into a public building, when it's done. The capitol at Washington would be a good place."

"Yes—or the Metropolitan Museum."

"Gee—whiz!" This exclamation was wrung from Walmers by the contemplation of almost insupportable magnificence. Acceptance for the Metropolitan! He had never been hung there, but his chums assured him that he would be, some time—only, they pronounced it "hanged." It is a way that young painters have with one another. After this utterance, the artist dropped back into his chair, and resumed his contemplations.

It was a great season for Walmers. Even if he had not proclaimed it through "the Monastery," it would have cost little of mental upset among the other "fellows" to believe that he had at last struck luck. The lean, diffident, shabby young man, who went in and out so quietly, sometimes with a canvas under his arm that was surely destined for Moritz Levi's art gallery, at the sign of the three balls—this young man was beginning to gain color and confidence, and he was heard bursting into song, at unseemly

hours. He hummed, whistled, banged the doors, and bought Chinese porcelain. And the "fellows" were glad of his gladness; for, the fewer delinquents there were in the matter of rents, the easier was the landlord in specific instances of delinquency.

Mr. Perkins refrained from visiting the Works for some days, for he did not wish to interfere with the flow of thought and the flood of fancy that would project themselves upon the glowing canvas. Walmers was all right, he was sure, and now that he had a sum of money in the bank, or somewhere, that would free his mind from the cark and fret of poverty, he could give his time wholly to his painting, and could prosper, and the syndicate could afterward inflate itself for its service to native art, and expect some keepsakes.

But with the usual—one will not say timidity, but interest and prudence of capital, Mr. Perkins kept the working member of the company in view, and even in sight. To that end he invited him to the house to tea, now and then, lest he should be invited to places where they served claret, and presently he found himself climbing the Monastery stairs once more, in that restful time that is half-way between luncheon and dinner. He knocked at Walmers's door, now garnished with a brass plate. Some artists have models, and keep their doors locked till the session is over, for you pay half-a-dollar an hour to some kinds of a model, and time is valuable while he or she poses. But Walmers had grown so used to not having money that he never acquired the door-locking habit; hence, there being no response to the summons, Mr. Perkins took the liberty of walking in. He found Walmers in the same attitude as when he had left him there a couple of weeks before. So deeply was he absorbed in meditation that his eyes were closed, and he was breathing heavily.

"Hello, Walmers!" he called out, briskly.

Walmers opened one eye, drowsily,

stretched himself, opened the other, and arose with a yawn. "Oh, it's you, is it?" he asked, extending a hand.

"Of course it is," observed his visitor, with a hint of testiness in his voice. "What needless questions people ask, sometimes, don't they?"

"Guess I must have dropped off, for half a wink. Painting is trying on the eyes."

"So! Then you've really got at it?" inquired the capitalist.

"Oh, bless you, don't you see?" And the artist pointed to the canvas—the same canvas.

"Well, but there's no paint on that."

"Ah, I use the word in a general sense. You see, I've been working on the figure of Washington, and I'm not going to commit it to paint till I get it right. That's to occupy the centre, and the others, being subsidiary, will take less study."

"But I don't see any Washington."

"Yes, you will, if you look, though I've drawn, and redrawn and rearranged the thing so often that I don't wonder you hardly recognize it. Washington was there. Now, I am going to put him here." And he thoughtfully erased a few of the charcoal scrawls, hastily drew a head in their place, that might have passed for Washington's, at night, and as thoughtfully dusted it off. "You know," he continued, drawing another in its place, "these things have to grow. You can't force 'em. You have to wait for inspiration, sometimes." Here he cut off the general's head, and built up another on his shoulders. "You have an idea, and it seems all right; but, just as you put it down, you get another one"—daintily amputating an ear—"and away goes the first," smiting the hero's nose into space.

"Like other businesses, then?"

"Oh, say, Perkins, don't speak of art as business. I can't abide it. Pot-boiling's business, if you like—making those little daubs that I worked off on you and the others when you first began coming to the

studios—but, Lor'! there were no ideas in them."

"That's refreshing."

"Tut! That was a part of your education, and education is always expensive. If I hadn't sold those chromos to you, and for half what they were worth, mind you, some other chap would have sold you worse. You've given them all away to country aunts and Sunday schools, I trust, and know better than to buy them now. We have to begin that way. Some poor devil must be roasted, first. And the funny part of it is, we don't know we're funny when we're new."

"Even then, you're not so funny as the people you take in."

"Well, there are two of a kind, in most bargains."

Mr. Perkins laughed and nursed his knee, as he lolled in the only easy-chair. He was watching the birth of a new Washington under the hasty fingers of the painter. It assumed shape, it had even a human suggestion in it; but, just as the head of the syndicate was opening his mouth to praise it, Walmers caught up a rag, and with three flips of it banished the Father of his Country from the scene. "Ah, I don't seem to get on, this afternoon," he sighed.

"Indigestion?"

"Gosh, no! You ought to see my appetite."

"You don't sleep enough. You're looking rusty."

"Is that it, do you think? And I was in by one o'clock, too."

"One? You ought to turn in at ten when you have a great scheme on hand."

"Do you ever have great schemes?"

"In business—yes."

"Turn in at ten, when you have 'em?"

"N-n-not always. But, as you remarked just now, business is different."

"Not so awfully. I have to circulate, to get ideas. I have to see the exhibitions—have to go to the Metropolitan, to see the portraits—have to look up histories—have to see the artists, to get into the right atmosphere."

"But you've been at work now for a couple of weeks."

"The devil I have!"

"Now, look here, Walmers. It may be a delicate matter, but, really, you must remember that this isn't your own time, altogether. You are virtually on salary, and you owe the company some pictures."

"I haven't forgotten it. I'm not likely to forget it while I dine sumptuously every day and wear purple and fine neckties. It merely takes time to get used to prosperity. You ought to have educated me to it by degrees, I suppose."

"You were carousing again last night?"

"Carousing? Now, that's deuced unkind of you, Perkins. I just ran up to the Martini, and had dinner. A fellow can't go all day without food, and do any work."

"But a regular dinner doesn't satisfy you."

"Why, surely it does. Of course, you've got to wet it. But I had only a couple of cocktails, a mouthful of sherry, half a bottle of burgundy, a pint of fizz, and one or two liqueurs."

"Was it one—or was it two?"

"H'm! Well, I believe—come to think of it—it was three."

"And you expect to paint, when you're carrying a load like that?"

"Load? For goodness' sake, what is your estimate of an ordinary human capacity? Now, if it had been two or three quarts of fizz, it would have been different. Besides, I had only to carry it to bed. You don't imagine that I come up here and work in the dark, by lamplight. They cut off my gas three weeks ago."

"Oh, Walmers, Walmers! I'm afraid this syndicate isn't going to pay dividends, unless you brace up and go back to the old ways."

"The old ways? Heaven forbid! The old ways were hunger and shining elbows and no cigarettes. And bills! Not even colors and brushes. They were days of borrowing, as you remember, and shirking, and shifting, and losing one's grip and manliness.

Don't imagine, because I am bracing a starved body with food, and a starved mind with pleasure, that I don't understand my position. I am simply getting into shape to work. I'm in arrears with the world, and as soon as I catch up I shall go at things, like a steam engine."

"How many other steam engines did you stoke up last night?"

"Only six."

"You took six fellows to dinner?"

"Why, certainly. I had the price—they hadn't."

"Artists?"

"Naturally. Who needs a dinner more than an artist?"

"But isn't that kind of thing disorganizing? Couldn't you be satisfied to dine by yourself?"

"Never so long as there are fellows to dine at my expense—or I at theirs."

"You must be just before you are generous. Remember—"

"My dear old boy, you people of the world don't understand. It isn't mere physical starvation that I've been going through—it's social starvation. I have been shut out by poverty from association with my kind. My shoes have holes in them—I mean, they had; my linen was not fit for publication; I had whiskers on my trouser bottoms long enough to comb; I had to put blacking on the collar of my coat; I had to paint my shirt, where it showed through a rent in my— By-the-bye, did you ever go without dinner, for a couple of months, just to see what it would be like? You might be able to do it, knowing that you had the price in your pocket. But I mean, did you ever go without your grub because you couldn't get it?"

"Not for any long time."

"There you are! Now, a picture is no good unless it has life, is it? No. I've got to get life. How? By eating it, and drinking it, and seeing it. I've got to arrive at my normal state through company and cheer. Now that I'm ostensibly, or, as you would have me say, ostentatiously, rich, I'm going to hear music and see pretty women."



"Oh!" groaned Mr. Perkins.

"Don't do that. When I say 'see' I mean 'see.' I'm not going to pay their bills. I must go to theatres and restaurants where they are. I must drive once in a while, and see them in the Park, and take notes of their complexions. Why, confound it, man, do you know I've been shut up in the Monastery here for a week at a time, when I never saw a female except Mary Ann, who is sixty if she's a minute, and who is supposed to dust out here, Fridays? Art is a human product, and you can't separate it from humanity and keep your art—leastwise, not the kind of art I do. It's all well enough for fellows who muss around in landscape and still life to bury themselves, but you can't get decorations and allegories out of barn-yards."

"Well, I trust that we shall get some out of studios," observed Mr. Perkins, severely.

"You shall, old man—you shall!" exclaimed Walmers, cheerily.

"Why not shut yourself in, and begin now?"

"I would, only, you see, it's five o'clock, and I've got to dress for dinner."

The principal stock-holder in the Walmers Syndicate flung up his hands despairingly and took his leave, the other regarding him on his exit with a puzzled countenance. He looked at the Great Work on his easel, looked at it critically, looked at it with a sort of melancholy; then he took a rag and exterminated the Genius of America, gave the *coup de grâce* to an artillery officer who had been struggling to express his anatomy, dismounted a cannon, lingered, shook his head impatiently, and scrambled into his evening clothes.

This may be a painful theme to pursue. Mr. Perkins grew haggard in pursuing it. His visits to the Works occurred at longer intervals, but at each he was more irascible and explosive than before. Walmers was propitiatory, amiable, and had begun to wear a sleek and well-groomed aspect. He even told of orders he was beginning

to receive on the strength of his new social connections and his appearance, and Mr. Perkins had momentary hopes; but, as the orders never seemed to be in process of fulfilment, his gloom returned.

Two months had passed, and the phantom Genius of America was still clutching her uncertain sword, but still lacked a Washington to urge. A few daubs of color had been put upon the canvas, here and there, but the work was not progressing. Martini's bank account had increased, somewhat, and Mr. Walmers was one of the welcome guests at his hostelry. The Arts Association held its exhibit, and there was no Walmers in the catalogue. The Associated Figure Painters had their yearly show, and in that, also, was no Walmers. Duns, who had been polite to the painter for a while, began to be seen once more about the Monastery, as they called the studio building where Walmers did his work—when he worked. Things were coming to a pass. They arrived.

It was a Winter evening, and the painter was beating his way up the Avenue, toward Martini's, in the teeth of a raw and searching wind. He wore a shining silk hat, a fawn-colored coat, lavender gloves, a showy tie with a pin in it, patent leathers and irreproachable linen. As he bowed before a shrilling blast, he nearly bumped Mr. Perkins, who was drifting down the walk before it, yawning wildly at the street corners.

"By George, old man," cried Walmers, brightly, "just the fellow I would meet! Come and dine with me."

"No, Mr. Walmers."

"Mister? Oh, say! there's no need of taking that distant tone. What's wrong?"

"You are, principally."

"What have I done?"

"Nothing. That's just the trouble."

"Ah, you mean I haven't got at the painting yet. What an impatient lot you business men are! You're going to get everything that's coming to you, as I've told you, over and over. But

say, Perkins, I'm a bit short. Have you got ten dollars in your clothes—just enough to last me till to-morrow?"

"No, Mr. Walmers. And, if I had, I doubt if I should lend it to you. You forget that you are in debt to the syndicate for a thousand dollars."

"Forget? Never! I would owe it to you forever, rather than let it be supposed I could forget a thing like that. Ha, ha!"

"This is no laughing matter, sir."

"Don't be so deadly serious. On my word, you make it ten degrees colder. Let's go in and drink a Manhattan, to warm up."

"Mr. Walmers, have you become a confirmed tippler?"

"Pish, and tush, and eke gadzooks! Nay."

"And spendthrift?"

"Fie, Mr. Perkins! I'll warrant I spend less than you."

"I have a family, sir, and I also work."

"Well, and don't I?"

"You have worked the syndicate, sir."

"Mr. Perkins, I'm sorry to hear you say that. I really didn't think you had lost your trust in me. You mustn't suppose that I forget my obligations."

"You have forgotten them, sir. You have utterly failed to live up to them. I don't know whether the other backers will move for legal redress or not, but I am free to say that unless results are forthcoming within this month, I shall sue to recover my loss."

"Mr. Perkins!"

"Don't offer any excuses. I'm tired of them. I don't know why the artistic temperament, as you are pleased to call it, should be given as a reason for not paying debts, or not behaving decently. There's only one standard of morals in this world, and that's the right standard. I'm disappointed in this venture, and I'm astonished—I'm grieved. Not only have you created distrust in me, but you've lessened my regard for artists and my interest in art. If you are willing to redeem

yourself—but it's so long since you've done anything that I've given up hope of that."

"I'll bid you good night, Mr. Perkins."

"Good night."

Walmers continued to plough along the Avenue. He passed Martini's, walked a block beyond, hesitated, and turned back. The lights were glowing; the lace curtains bore silhouettes of pretty heads; a strain from one of Liszt's rhapsodies, wild, lawless music, came through the door as it opened to admit a party, rustling in silks. "By George, I'll have one more!" he muttered, and, turning sharply, ran up the steps.

"*Un dîner*," bawled the waiter down the speaking-tube to the kitchen, a moment later, "*un martini, une demi bouteille de Chablis '87, et une demi bouteille de champagne, bien frappé*."

Walmers feasted at his leisure, enjoyed the music, basked in the warmth, drew in life from the glow and bustle, the chatter and movement, smoked a *delizioso* at his leisure, puffing the clouds at the goddesses and amoretto arabesqued over the ceiling, and affecting to view those beings with a critical eye; pinned a carnation from the table bouquet into his button-hole, tipped Alphonse, bade him charge the dinner, which the smiling head-waiter told him would be done, and sauntered away.

It was silent and dark in the Monastery, and the steps of the painter seemed to echo through infinities as he climbed slowly to his studio. A squeak and shuffle, as he opened the door, told him that a mouse had been busy with something in his apartment. "I wonder what the little devil has found to eat in here?" he muttered.

The weather was worse. It had begun to snow, and flakes were beating against the skylight with a rattle like shot. A faint light came through it—the faint light of a city's lamps, reflected back from storm clouds. Whir-r-r! A blind had broken and blown away, somewhere in the neighborhood.

Without removing his hat or coat, Walmers groped to the arm-chair, and plumped himself into it. He sat there for some moments. A gust of cyclonic energy roared past and threatened to beat in the panes.

"Hey! It's getting breezy outside," he soliloquized. "Guess a fire wouldn't be bad."

Kindling and coal were in the grate, and he applied a match, putting up the blower till he had a cheery blaze going. Then, he peeled off his overcoat and coat, hung them away with more than usual care, put his hat into a bandbox, untied his shoes, thrust his feet into slippers, flung on a smoking-

jacket, and lighted the gas. For his meter had been put back. There was a bottle in a cupboard, where he kept paints, oils, and odds and ends. It held one drink of *bénédictine*. He turned it out into a glass, holding the bottle upside-down till the last drop ran out. Against the light, it glowed like a tiger's eye. He drank it slowly, and treasured it.

"Well," he observed, as he caught a glimpse of himself in the mirror on his wall, "you're not looking badly, old boy—fifty per cent. better than you did two months ago. Old chap, do you know we've had a devilish good time? And now we've got to work!"



## TULIPS

MOONS of shining yellow  
Trembling in the grass,  
Where the zephyr monkeys  
With the sassafras,

You begild my vision,  
Even as a toy  
Paints the bubbling fancy  
Of a little boy.

And, when on your petals  
Tenderly I look,  
Though you grace a potlet  
Or a meadow nook,

Thrill I with a prescience  
Of the Summer sea  
And the moonlit ripples'  
Lisping witchery,

Till I scent the chowder's  
Odor—which, I wis,  
Is the juicy hard clam's  
Apotheosis.

R. K. MUNKITTRICK.



THE woman who didn't surprise a man would surprise him even more than if she did.

## KISMET

BEFORE the world had thought to be,  
 Or stars their courses ran,  
 Alone and free the Sisters Three  
 Shaped out the thing called man.

And what they ruled by rune and rhyme  
 Ere yet the sun had sway,  
 We, at the pinnacle of time,  
 Must think and do to-day.

They weighed the portion of our tears,  
 And dealt the cards of joy,  
 To whom the awful roaring spheres  
 Are but a noisy toy.

Yet each man takes his life in hand,  
 And lives it bit by bit—  
 The life he cannot understand—  
 And thinks he fashioned it!

But do they smile, the Sisters Three,  
 Who wove the web of old?  
 I wis their hearts must gentle be,  
 Although their eyes are cold.

Only, the problem must not stop  
 In solving, for all time—  
 The way unto the mountain-top  
 Must be a weary climb.

Take, then, the measure of distress,  
 For each, since time began,  
 Must drain the cup of bitterness  
 To make himself a man.

REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN.



## THE GREATER QUESTION

HUSBAND—I don't see how I can afford to send you away this Summer.  
 WIFE—I wish you would solve a much more important problem than that.  
 “What is it?”  
 “Just where I'd better go.”

# THE POMPADOUR'S PROTÉGÉ\*

By Kate Jordan Vermilye

## THE PEOPLE

THE MARQUISE DE POMPADOUR . . .	<i>Favorite of Louis XV.; in the zenith of her beauty, about twenty-seven years of age</i>
MACHAULT . . . . .	<i>In favor with THE POMPADOUR; very handsome, very manly, elegantly, but not foppishly, dressed; about twenty-five years of age</i>
D'ARGENSON . . . . .	<i>An enemy of THE POMPADOUR's; a cynical, blasé, effeminate court exquisite, about forty years of age</i>
ATHÈNÉE . . . . .	<i>A native of Martinique, very pretty and earnest, simply attired, about eighteen years of age</i>
SACAR . . . . .	<i>THE POMPADOUR's small, black slave boy</i>

THE time is late Summer, in the year 1757. The Scene, after Fragonard, is an enchanting spot in the gardens of Versailles. Alleys, in varying tones of green, show a billowy cloud effect of sky in the perspective. The spot is enclosed in a frame of foliage. In the foreground there is a column bearing a statue; the base of this forms a marble seat with steps. Behind the statue, and over it, clamber the loose roses of late Summer. The singing of birds is heard. Now and then an overblown rose sheds its petals, which flutter through the sunlight, and this occasional drifting of a breeze-blown flower is sustained throughout the act. When the curtain rises, it is a golden afternoon on the edge of sunset. COUNT D'ARGENSON paces slowly to the alley extending back, and looks off.

D'ARGENSON

The blow to her vanity this morning has not made The Pompadour punctual.

(He takes out a letter.) If she knew my real reason for seeking this interview! (Holds letter off, and laughs.) The king's dismissal from Versailles! Her social death warrant! When I deliver it, I shall feel that it satisfies my hatred of her, and wipes out old scores. (He puts it again in pocket. Soft singing is heard in distance.) Ah! With her usual insouciance! (D'ARGENSON listens expectantly, comes down, and stands waiting.)

THE POMPADOUR appears at the end of the alley. She presents an exquisite picture of beauty and splendor, framed in flowers. She comes forward slowly, smiling, carrying a high cane. She is followed by SACAR.

THE POMPADOUR

I've kept you waiting, count. I hope, in this delicious quiet, where Autumn is just hinted at, you have reflected—on your sins. (She extends her hand. He kisses it with excessive hu-

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*mility. She slips off her loose cloak. SACAR receives it, and flings it over a corner of the stone seat, and retires.)*

D'ARGENSON

Though the sun be late in rising, marquise, we do not quarrel with it when it really comes, and we bask in its light.

THE POMPADOUR

Don't compare me to the sun. I won't be likened to such a round-faced thing.

D'ARGENSON

To what could one dare liken you? (THE POMPADOUR *listens with a skeptical smile.*) One may say that this faint, pink rose (*plucks one*) is like the color in your cheek, and this damask one (*plucks another*) like your lips, and the golden radiance in the west there like your smile; but, when you appear, compliment flies before you, abashed.

THE POMPADOUR

Thank you.

D'ARGENSON

You are like the spirit of the morning.

THE POMPADOUR

Thank you.

D'ARGENSON

You are a picture of Flora. Would that Fragonard were here!

THE POMPADOUR (*laughing in scorn*)

You are really surpassing yourself this afternoon, my dear count. But come—state your business.

D'ARGENSON (*in injured tone*)

Marquise!

THE POMPADOUR

You want something of me. Every one does.

D'ARGENSON

I confess I did wish to bespeak your patronage for my young cousin, but that was before I heard that the king—ah, marquise, I cannot frame the words. I suffer with you.

THE POMPADOUR *has been watching him amusedly. She walks past him, and flings her head back.*

THE POMPADOUR

Not *with* me, my dear, sympathetic friend, for I am not suffering. Why should I be?

D'ARGENSON

But I heard that after Damiens had stabbed the king—

THE POMPADOUR (*strolling back*)

You heard that he called for the cardinal, and for his confessor, and for his queen—the dear Marie—and for the dauphin—his precious child. You heard that, lying in his darkened chamber, he denied me admittance this morning. I'm sure you heard all that?

D'ARGENSON

Alas, yes.

THE POMPADOUR

Alas? (*Laughs.*) My dear count, this is nothing. Whenever he gets ill, he refuses to see me; but, once let that insect of a priest turn his back, and Louis the Penitent will become Louis the *bon vivant* again, calling for me as the brightest of his distractions.

D'ARGENSON (*with a covert smile, going nearer*)

Yet the lot of a favorite is a precarious one, marquise. She has a shifting value.

THE POMPADOUR

Do I not know it well? A king's smile—and her chariot rides over the necks of the people. A king's frown—and the people stir ominously beneath those chariot wheels. A king's adieu—and they rise, and curse, and stone her.

D'ARGENSON

Such thoughts might well keep you awake the long night through.

THE POMPADOUR *breaks off a long rose, and kisses it.*

THE POMPADOUR

I sleep well. Louis will never say adieu to me. My emerald upon it.

D'ARGENSON

Yet I have heard it said, and only to-day—

THE POMPADOUR

I know these moralists. Pah! Envious cats! (*She strips the rose stem, and flings the petals over her shoulder.*) They'd give their eyes to be in my place.

D'ARGENSON (*bowing very low*)

You seem to know your world, marquise.

THE POMPADOUR (*mocking his bow*)

I was born wise, count. (*She strolls to seat, puts her foot on step, and leans on her cane, looking at him with lazy scorn.*)

D'ARGENSON

I do confess there are many ladies in the court who would gladly be harnessed in your chariot wheels, provided its destination were a nunnery's gate.

THE POMPADOUR

And afterward? Oh, surely they'd want a peep at me afterward, as a *bonne bouche*—my head shaved, my heart heavy, and this exquisite body all in brown. (*Shivers.*)

D'ARGENSON

Heaven deliver you from such a fate, marquise.

THE POMPADOUR

Not heaven, d'Argenson. My deliverance is here. (*Touches her brow.*) My woman's wit.

D'ARGENSON

Although we differ about some things, I cannot but admire you.

THE POMPADOUR (*coming toward him*)

We differ most in our estimate of a certain person.

D'ARGENSON

Machault? Your handsome protégé, whom you have made controller of finances, because he has a face and figure like Apollo? Eh?

THE POMPADOUR (*coldly*)

I can dispense with your criticism of Machault.

D'ARGENSON

But I merely say that he is handsome—too young for his honors—

THE POMPADOUR

Why do you pause?

D'ARGENSON (*mockingly*)

But you forbade my speaking. May I go on?

THE POMPADOUR (*imperiously*)

Yes, speak.

D'ARGENSON

Then, I believe that in your heart of hearts, marquise, providing there is such a nook, you love this youth.

THE POMPADOUR (*breathlessly*)

Love him?

D'ARGENSON

So they say.

THE POMPADOUR

Love him! So—they say—that?

D'ARGENSON

The signs are there for all to read.

THE POMPADOUR

Where?

D'ARGENSON

In your fair face, marquise, now, at the moment, on my soul!

THE POMPADOUR (*recovering herself*)

Be careful what you say.

D'ARGENSON

Can you say that if Machault went out of your life to-day—forever—say, if he died— (*THE POMPADOUR'S eyes close shudderingly; she trembles, and turns away her face.* D'ARGENSON laughs.) No need for further words, marquise. Perhaps you do not know it—perhaps you dare not face it—but you do love this protégé of yours, or all signs lie.

THE POMPADOUR (*turning and leaning on her cane, defiantly*)

Have you had your jest? Then I may tell you what I think of another than Machault.

D'ARGENSON

Of whom?

THE POMPADOUR

Of d'Argenson.

D'ARGENSON

Ah? Am I to be honored by knowing what the charming marquise thinks of me?

THE POMPADOUR

You are. The charming marquise thinks you an abominable knave.

D'ARGENSON (*reproachfully*)

Marquise!

THE POMPADOUR

A smiling, sneering, malicious enemy.

D'ARGENSON

I am overcome by this.

THE POMPADOUR

Because the king refused me an audience this morning, you sought this interview covertly to mock me. You thought to find me sad, perhaps in tears. (*Laughs.*) Look at me. Am I so? Am I not glorious? Was I ever lovelier? Do you read defeat in my face? Search my eyes—is there a shadow? Watch my lips—do they tremble? And this hand—is it not steady enough to hold a little pool of water in its palm?

D'ARGENSON

Marquise, in faith, you do me wrong.

THE POMPADOUR

Go back to my traducers, and say that the whim of a sick man has lain as lightly on The Pompadour's spirit as these rose leaves on her head. Say that to Louis the king she is as necessary as the beating of his heart. Only when that heart is stilled will the reins of power slip from her hands.

D'ARGENSON

You speak with amazing confidence.

THE POMPADOUR

Go. Our interview is ended. Tell them what I have said. Say that to Louis XV. I am the dearest thing on this round earth.

D'ARGENSON (*bowing low and moving away*)

If I ever doubted your power, marquise, this hour would have converted

me. You are the real queen of my beloved country. Your hands really hold the sceptre of France. Adieu! Ah, but wait! I have a letter here the cardinal commissioned me to deliver to you. I had almost forgotten it. (*He advances with it. With a mystified, suspicious glance, THE POMPADOUR takes it. D'ARGENSON retreats and waits.*)

THE POMPADOUR

From de Bernis?

D'ARGENSON (*smiling and covering his lips with his fingers*)

No, from the king.

For a moment, THE POMPADOUR stands with the letter, which she has opened, unread. She is turned from D'ARGENSON. Her eyes look into space with a sudden fear. Then, she reads the letter slowly and with evident difficulty, and gives a broken cry. Her cane falls.

D'ARGENSON (*coming forward a few steps*)

Marquise!

THE POMPADOUR crushes the letter in her hand, and speaks with difficulty, without looking at him.

THE POMPADOUR

I told you to go. Obey me!

D'ARGENSON

For the last time! (*He bows, his glance triumphant, and goes out, the left side.*) THE POMPADOUR stands as if made of stone. SACAR enters, picks up the cane, which she takes from him mechanically, and waits at the seat. THE POMPADOUR moves with an effort across the stage, sinks on the stone seat under statue, the letter in her hand. She waves SACAR away. He retires back.)

THE POMPADOUR

Driven out! Disgraced! Oh! (*She opens letter, and reads*) "Leave Versailles at once—never to return. Signed, Louis—Rex." (*A shuddering sigh breaks from her.*) "Never to return. Signed, Louis—Rex." My God! How I exulted! How that

traitor was inwardly mocking me! Oh, I am food for my enemies! (*A woman's laugh is heard off.*) They are laughing at me! They are laughing at me this moment! (*She gives a bitter cry, and, bending forward, hides her face in her clenched hands. The light has been fading during this scene. Now sunset flushes the gardens with a delicate, pink light.*)

MACHAULT enters, and comes around the column. On seeing THE POMPADOUR, he pauses in amazement. He goes nearer.

MACHAULT

Marquise!

THE POMPADOUR (*looking up*)

Ah, Machault! I—I—thought I was alone. (*She moves to rise, but sinks back, turning her face from him, resting her cheek on her hand, and struggling with her sobs.*)

MACHAULT

You are in trouble, marquise—in tears. I never saw you so before. (*THE POMPADOUR moves her head, unable to speak. He bends over her.*) Is it because—as they say—the king was unkind to you to-day—sent you away when you sought to speak to him?

*She nods, then speaks with difficulty.*

THE POMPADOUR

Yes—sent me away!

MACHAULT

But it was only a mood. You know his nature. A little illness frightens him. But he will send for you again. (*Speaks despondently.*) Ah, be sure he will not let you go.

THE POMPADOUR

Read this. (*Without turning, she holds out the crushed letter.*)

MACHAULT (*comes forward, reading*)

Banishment from the court—Louis returns to the queen! Oh! (*His face lights up with joy. He stands for a moment, silent, then goes to her.*) Does it mean so much to you, marquise?

THE POMPADOUR springs up. Her eyes are blazing, her hands clenched.

*She comes down, and moves about restlessly.*

THE POMPADOUR

You know what it means. I am driven out—disgraced. I am a thing for jeers to-night. I—The Pompadour.

MACHAULT (*meeting her, and looking in her eyes*)

But does it mean so much?

THE POMPADOUR

It means I am more beggared than a beggar. (*Walks rapidly.*) Oh, I am an ex-favorite—a soiled, superfluous toy—I who had my heel upon France—I who could have made a thousand heads tumble to possess a new estate—who could have seen the peasantry starve, and their sufferings transformed into diamonds to blaze upon my body. This is what he accustomed me to—the king!—and he has cast me off. Oh, I am half-mad to think upon it!

MACHAULT (*meeting her again, and commanding her attention by a gesture*)

But does it mean only that?

THE POMPADOUR

Only that? What else is there?

MACHAULT

Ah, that question tells me your heart is empty. You do not love the king.

THE POMPADOUR (*folding her arms, and smiling with a sneer*)

Love him? Love this coward? Love this king who, even at his best, is fit only for the cap and apron of a chef? (*She looks away, in thought, and speaks with sudden tenderness.*) Years ago, he was not so—I remember after Fontenoy—ah, then! (*Passes her hand over her eyes.*) Love? The word has been strange to me for years. (*She moves back slowly, and sinks on seat, resting her chin upon her hand, looking away sadly, past MACHAULT. He goes nearer, watches her for a pause, then kneels upon the stone seat beside her. The light deepens to rose color, and bathes them.*)

MACHAULT

If I could but make it the one word of your life.

THE POMPADOUR (*looking at him, startled*)

Machault!

*He takes her hand, and presses it to his heart, she gazing at him, fascinated.*

MACHAULT

If I could make you taste its passionate, sweet pain, make you know its divine face—as I do—oh, as I do!

THE POMPADOUR

You—love—me?

MACHAULT

I love you. Have I not kept my secret well?

THE POMPADOUR

I never dreamed you loved me!

MACHAULT

Honor kept me silent. I saw you happy—seemingly so—and the king's. So, though the day was dark when I saw you not, you did not guess it.

THE POMPADOUR (*bitterly*)

But now you speak to me—because you pity me.

MACHAULT

Why should I pity you? Because the splendor of the court is taken from you? Ah, that is nothing. Had you loved the king as La Vallière loved his father—ah, then—! But the heart that is empty of love cannot suffer.

THE POMPADOUR

Is this true, I wonder? (*She still gazes at him.*)

MACHAULT

I know it well.

THE POMPADOUR

You really—love—me?

MACHAULT (*passionately*)

If I could make you know it other than by the saying of it! Love that would send me to the headsman for you, if need be, is but a cold coupling of letters upon the lips. (*He kisses her hands, she gazing at him.*)

THE POMPADOUR (*slowly, with awe*)  
It almost frightens me!

MACHAULT

The thought of what thrills in my heart?

THE POMPADOUR

No, no!—the something that is crying out in my own—that will be heard—that no longer will be stilled!

MACHAULT

Oh, marquise, if it should be——!

THE POMPADOUR

I have been a stranger to love, as you say. I—I—never felt this before. I, who tried to make myself believe I had everything the world could give, never heard words coined of magic like yours. I have heard much of adoration and passion, but they were as a body without a soul. Your words, Machault, your voice, your touch——

MACHAULT

Yes—yes! They are not so?

THE POMPADOUR

They trouble me so sweetly. My heart aches with a delicious pain. I seem to know that you would love me so if my beauty faded—that you would die for me, as you say.

MACHAULT

Yes, yes!

THE POMPADOUR *speaks as if in a dream as she lays her hand on his shoulder, while he slowly puts his arm about her.*

THE POMPADOUR

It is like the perfume of the roses. It is like music. It could make death sweet. (*She sinks in his arms, and he kisses her, while the sunset deepens to a flaming crimson. After a pause, she puts him gently away; gazes at him; rises.*) I seem to have been sleeping all my life—all my life—and now have awakened to a new world. (*She opens her arms wide, and gazes about.*) Oh, how beautiful it is!

MACHAULT *puts his arm around her, and they come down together.*



MACHAULT

We will leave Versailles to-night?

THE POMPADOUR (*with childish tenderness*)

Plan my life for me, my dearest. Love me just as a woman is loved. Master me—make me obey you—but, oh, love me all the time!

MACHAULT

To-night, then, marquise—

THE POMPADOUR

I am not a marquise. I am a woman with a little, simple name. Call me by that.

MACHAULT

To-night, my Jeanne—

THE POMPADOUR (*drawing his arm closer*)

Ah, that warms my heart!

MACHAULT

We will leave Versailles separately, and meet in Paris to-morrow.

THE POMPADOUR

And then?

MACHAULT

Doubtless, I shall be exiled to my estates in Normandy for this.

THE POMPADOUR

And I will go into exile with you. Would that they were beyond the world's edge, in some beautiful land where all could be forgotten in a love as fresh as Eden's.

MACHAULT (*whose face has been brightening at her words*)

We can go to this magical land. We can sail for it from Marseilles in three days.

THE POMPADOUR

Tell me.

MACHAULT

My estates in Martinique— (*He drops on one knee.*) Oh, Jeanne, the wonder of that island's southern beauty! The flowers are falling here at Autumn's breath, but there they never fall. You have never seen a blue sea, or known the real fragrance of the earth, till you sit with me in my gardens there while the quick sunset

dyes the world as if with blood. Will you come?

THE POMPADOUR (*gaily*)

Yes—yes—yes! Oh, to begin this dream with you! I seem to see that blue sea. (*He kisses her hands.*) I am so happy it frightens me.

MACHAULT (*rising*)

You will give up much to go with me. Doubtless the king, in his wrath, will take all your possessions.

THE POMPADOUR

But I am going to be so rich in something else!

MACHAULT

Sweetheart! (*He looks up at the darkening sky.*) But I must leave you for a little. I was to see the cardinal at this hour. See, the light is going, and the mist is creeping up. Will you go to the palace, or wait here?

THE POMPADOUR

You will not be long?

MACHAULT

Not very.

THE POMPADOUR

I'll wait here, then; it is so sweet, and the palace smells of death to-day.

MACHAULT

But it is cold in the night breeze.

THE POMPADOUR

No—no! leave me here to dream till you come back.

*He leads her to the seat, kisses her, and goes to end of alley, at the left.*

MACHAULT

I shall not be long away. (*Goes out.*)

THE POMPADOUR, *left alone, sits with her hands clasped around her knees. She sighs, and lifts her face.*

THE POMPADOUR

I am so happy! I used to think the poets mad. Now I know they alone spoke the truth. I am cast off, I shall be beggared—yet I am happy for the first time. The glory, the joy, the tenderness of it! (*She sits dreaming, the first rays of moonlight touching her.*)

*From the right side, ATHÈNÉE enters slowly, looking about, startled. She is very pretty and young; her face is pale and sad. She is dressed in brown, a long cloak covering her, a hood, half-fallen, on her shoulders. She does not see THE POMPADOUR, who watches her. As ATHÈNÉE nears the seat, she sways, and presses her hand to her side.*

THE POMPADOUR (*approaching*)

You are ill, my child? You have come from the park gates. Have you lost your way?

ATHÈNÉE

Oh, madame, I am—very—faint.

THE POMPADOUR (*putting her arm around her, and leading her to seat*)

Rest there. You are over-tired. (*She unfastens ATHÈNÉE's cloak, and sits so that she rests against her.*)

ATHÈNÉE

You are very good.

THE POMPADOUR

In a moment you will feel better. Have you been ill?

ATHÈNÉE

No, madame. But I have come a long way across the seas. I have not slept, haunted by one thought——

THE POMPADOUR

Perhaps I can help you.

ATHÈNÉE

I am seeking the king's palace.

THE POMPADOUR

I can send my slave to show you the way. He is within call. But what mission can take you there, poor child? You seek an audience—to beg for a dear one's life, maybe?

ATHÈNÉE

Ah, you speak truly, madame. I come to beg for a man's life—but not as you mean. I am seeking the Marquise de Pompadour.

THE POMPADOUR (*taking her hand*)

Are you? What can you want with her? Tell me your story. You cannot see the marquise without my help.

ATHÈNÉE (*rising to kneeling posture, and clasping her hands*)

My father is one of the richest men in Martinique.

THE POMPADOUR (*rising, with change of expression*)

Martinique?

ATHÈNÉE

There I was born and have always lived. My father's cousin had estates near us, and his nephew, though living in France, came often to our island. We were lovers in childhood. Two years ago, his uncle died, and he came to take possession of his estates. I had not seen him for a long time—but, ah, when we met then, the love of the child became the love of the woman's heart. He was my prince indeed. (*She starts up.*) But I must not dwell on this. It weakens me. Enough to know that he returned to France. At first, his dear letters used to come; then, they ceased. At last, in answer to my prayers and reproaches, he wrote me that I must forget him—he no longer loved me——

THE POMPADOUR

The story that is so old—so old!

ATHÈNÉE

He loves The Pompadour——

THE POMPADOUR

What? Impossible! Poor child, she may not even know that your lover cares for her. I am sure she does not know.

ATHÈNÉE (*bitterly, coming forward*)

Why, then, has she loaded him with favors?

THE POMPADOUR (*startled, remaining behind her*)

But has she?

ATHÈNÉE

He is called her protégé. She has made him controller of finances.

THE POMPADOUR

Then—you must—mean Machault?

ATHÈNÉE (*turning to her*)

Ah, now you do not doubt! Yes—she has won him. She has broken my heart in two. (*Covers her face with her hands.*)

THE POMPADOUR *comes down, speaks slowly, without looking at* ATHÈNÉE.

THE POMPADOUR

But if she loves him, and he loves her—what then?

ATHÈNÉE (*bitterly*)

Yes—what then?

THE POMPADOUR

Then you must be like other women, and bear the pain. Love will not go where it is called, but where it chooses.

ATHÈNÉE

Yes, I know this is the bitter lesson she has set for me. But I have stolen from my home, and crossed the seas with only my old nurse, to win back my lover, if I can; if not, at least to save him from that woman. Her love is wrapped in shame.

THE POMPADOUR

That is a cruel word.

ATHÈNÉE

But no stranger to her. What has her life been but shame? What will her love bring to Machault, with his boy's heart and his fresh hopes, but shame?

THE POMPADOUR (*agitated*)

May she not love him even better than you, in spite of this?

ATHÈNÉE

She love? Oh, madame, you, with your kind heart which responds to my distress, with your angelic eyes and soft touch, cannot champion such a woman!

THE POMPADOUR

She may love him better than you.

ATHÈNÉE

Oh, our island is far away, but its eyes are on France. The nobles who come there to buy lands have brought news of this Pompadour you defend.

THE POMPADOUR

Have they?

ATHÈNÉE

Is it not true that after her marriage she used to ride in the forest of Senart when the king was hunting, and cross his path continually, hoping to fix his eyes upon her beauty?

THE POMPADOUR (*with regret*)

Yes, that is true.

ATHÈNÉE

Afterward, when she won the thing she sought—the king's love—was she not a party to her husband's lifelong banishment?

THE POMPADOUR

Yes, that is true.

ATHÈNÉE

As the king's mistress, has she not beggared France for her whims? Ah, madame, you know little of your friend if you don't know what all France knows.

THE POMPADOUR

You are very merciless.

ATHÈNÉE

Mercy to her—that woman?

THE POMPADOUR

Oh, you are very hard. Nothing in the world is as pitiless as a young, innocent girl.

ATHÈNÉE

She is all that I say. How can she dare to love this boy, upon the threshold of his life?

THE POMPADOUR (*approaching her, laying a hand on her arm, wistfully*)

Suppose she gave up everything for him, and went to live with him in exile and solitude—would that not redeem her?

ATHÈNÉE

She could not be his wife, for her wretched husband still lives. Her past would be the serpent in that paradise.

THE POMPADOUR (*pleadingly*)

She is not so wholly lost, is she? Have you never heard of the hospital she built at Crécy?

ATHÈNÉE (*with cold contempt*)

She sent her husband into exile.

THE POMPADOUR (*more pleadingly*)

Have you never heard how she sold her jewels to give dowries to six hundred poor girls?

ATHÈNÉE

Thousands of starved peasants have died, cursing her with their last breath.

THE POMPADOUR

She might be born anew in a true love.

ATHÈNÉE

Yes, if an apple with a worm at its heart can put on its first freshness. Sins like hers leave acid stains upon the soul.

THE POMPADOUR

She might find innocence again.

ATHÈNÉE (*slowly, with burning scorn*)

She has been a courtesan for seven years.

THE POMPADOUR (*shuddering*)

That name! (*Looks at ATHÈNÉE in wild misery.*) Can nothing redeem her, then?

ATHÈNÉE

Yes, a sacrifice might.

THE POMPADOUR

You mean——?

ATHÈNÉE

If she would send Machault away from her, and so save him from herself. Her love could only make shipwreck of his young life.

THE POMPADOUR

He might not return to you.

ATHÈNÉE (*tenderly and sadly*)

I could give him up to another, who, like him, could bring a clean heart to God's altar.

THE POMPADOUR (*crushed*)

Ah!

ATHÈNÉE

You suffer, madame. You know this woman well?

THE POMPADOUR

Better now than ever before. (*She stands proudly, her face stricken.*) You are right. I promise you, you shall have your lover back. Have no fear. Honor shall mate with Innocence.

D'ARGENSON *enters from the left side.* ATHÈNÉE *moves back.* D'ARGENSON *carries a large document.* His manner is very humble and anxious, as he looks at THE POMPADOUR. The latter remains standing, looking into space, her face grief-stricken.

D'ARGENSON

Marquise, I bear another letter to you from the king. A rumor reached him that you had left for Paris. He dismissed his confessor, dismissed the queen. He summons you back. He can know no ease from pain until he looks upon your face again. (*THE POMPADOUR does not appear to hear him.*) This is the royal recall, marquise, and I am indeed your most humble servant.

ATHÈNÉE (*who has been listening in amazement*)

The Pompadour!

THE POMPADOUR *takes the letter listlessly, and tears it open, with a look of contempt.* She reads it, her lip curling.

D'ARGENSON

I will summon your chair, marquise. (*Goes out.*)

ATHÈNÉE (*approaching timidly*)

You are the Marquise de Pompadour!

THE POMPADOUR (*coldly*)

I am—that woman.

MACHAULT'S voice is heard from behind column.

MACHAULT (*softly*)

Marquise?

ATHÈNÉE (*retreating to shadow, as if to run away*)

Machault—his voice!

THE POMPADOUR

Do not go.

ATHÈNÉE *lingers in background*. MACHAULT *comes gaily down to THE POMPADOUR, and kisses her hand. She assumes a reckless smile.*

MACHAULT

Have you missed me?

THE POMPADOUR *draws away her hand with a laugh, the letter hidden at her side.*

THE POMPADOUR

You foolish boy.

MACHAULT (*attempting to put his arm around her*)

Oh, I have been thinking of you—such happy thoughts. I seem to have been dreaming.

THE POMPADOUR (*putting his arm away, with a lazy smile*)

You have, Machault. Let us say we have both been dreaming. That makes everything so simple, does it not?

MACHAULT

What do you mean? You look at me so oddly.

THE POMPADOUR

I am so happy—oh, I am so gloriously happy! Read this. (*She gives the letter with a gesture of triumph. MACHAULT reads it, and looks at her, mystified.*)

MACHAULT

You find it so sweet to triumph, though you have ceased to value what is offered?

THE POMPADOUR (*taking back the letter which he holds out*)

But I do value it. I live again. I am The Pompadour! See, he promises me six Arabian horses for my new chariot! (*Clasps the letter to her bosom, and laughs in delight.*)

MACHAULT *stands staring at her in amazement and pain. She meets his gaze for a moment, defiantly.*

THE POMPADOUR

Come—be sensible. We must both forget—

MACHAULT

Forget?

THE POMPADOUR

It was a bit of Summer madness.

MACHAULT (*sternly*)

Ah!

THE POMPADOUR

We will remember yesterday, and look forward to to-morrow. We will forget to-day—and, oh, Machault—I had forgotten this young girl here. (*ATHÈNÉE comes forward.*) She seeks the king's palace. Will you escort her for me? She seems ill. I go in my chair.

MACHAULT (*dazed*)

Athénée!

ATHÈNÉE *moves to him, her hands outstretched.*

THE POMPADOUR

Ah, you know each other, then? Perhaps it was you she sought. This meeting is fortunate. Sarac, fetch me my mirror.

THE POMPADOUR *goes to seat. SARAC hands her mirror and powder-box from her long cloak. She touches up, smiling, ignoring MACHAULT, who, despite ATHÈNÉE's pleading attitude, is staring at her with unbelieving eyes, his face grim.*

ATHÈNÉE (*to MACHAULT*)

I had to come. You are not angry?

MACHAULT

I will speak to you by-and-bye. (*He puts her aside, and approaches THE POMPADOUR.*) So you fed me with lies so short a while ago, marquise? At the king's summons, I am flung aside.

THE POMPADOUR (*examining her face, and pouting*)

Are you going to talk in that silly way? It was a bit of madness. Let it go at that.

D'ARGENSON *enters from the left side, unseen, and listens.*

MACHAULT (*furiously*)

Then, when you said you loved me, would go with me to Martinique, you were making jest of me, were you?



## THE POMPADOUR

Perhaps—who knows? (*Shrugs.*) Or, perhaps, I meant it for a little moment—yes, I think I did mean it for just a breath's space; though, to tell you the truth, my pretty Machault, after you left me, I sat here alone and thought of that awful sea and that hot, stupid land where the women shrivel up at thirty. (*Shivers.*) I confess I had a qualm.

## MACHAULT

But it was the king's recall with the six Arabian horses which doubtless turned the qualm to a resolve to have none of me and my love idyll, eh?

THE POMPADOUR (*defiantly, and leaning back with nonchalance*)

Well, then—yes. What would you have? Would you have the leopard change its spots? You know the sort of woman I am. I must have power, luxury, unbridled extravagance in everything. As for love—(*snaps her fingers*) a chimera—not necessary—not in the least.

MACHAULT (*drawing back in scorn*)

Ah, you are frank at last!

THE POMPADOUR (*still with defiance, her attitude one of ease*)

And you would have me give up all this—Louis, France, the splendor of my life—for a dream among flowers with a boy? (*Laughs mockingly.*) Be glad that I have awakened you fully, my dear friend, for I see you are awake. You would soon weary of me—I should grow so stupid there. I should die twice—the first time of ennui. (*Lifts little mirror again, and smiles up at him.*) Now, be sensible. Shall I have my woman put some diamond dust on my hair? I would be dazzling to-night! Am I in face, *mon cher*?

D'ARGENSON (*coming forward with sneering smile*)

Pardon, if I interrupt this communion of souls.

## MACHAULT

Leave us—I would speak further.

## D'ARGENSON

I could not help hearing. The king will be amused to know of this mushroom rivalry.

## MACHAULT

Leave us!

## D'ARGENSON

It will serve for a merry story on a Winter's night.

## MACHAULT

Leave us—or eat your insults at the sword's point!

## D'ARGENSON

With pleasure.

*They face each other, and draw swords. ATHÈNÉE runs to MACHAULT.*

## ATHÈNÉE

No, no! Oh, love, love!

THE POMPADOUR (*rising, and standing on step above them*)

I forbid this in my presence. Put up your swords. (D'ARGENSON obeys.) Go! (D'ARGENSON bows, and moves to the left. Goes out. MACHAULT's sword is still drawn.) Put up your sword! (MACHAULT does not move. He looks at her in scorn.) Obey me—or take your dismissal from the court from my lips.

## MACHAULT

I had been keeping this blade for my own heart. But no (*sheathing it*), I will not shed good blood for such as you.

THE POMPADOUR (*furiously*)

You dare——!

## MACHAULT

As for my dismissal, I resign from my office to-night, and the more leagues between me and this palace of corruption, the better. (*He bows mockingly.*) I understand you now, marquise. Years ago, you sold to the king what you are pleased to call your love. To-day, when you were smarting with the chagrin of a discarded favorite, desiring only what I could offer you—a refuge where you could hide your head from the sneering crowd—you sold it

to me. Now, you sell it again to the king. (*Bows again.*) He bought—I bought—he buys. Come, Athénée. (*MACHAULT puts his arm lightly around ATHÉNÉE; they come down. In this position, he turns so that they face THE POMPADOUR, while he speaks tenderly and sadly to ATHÉNÉE.*) You followed me across the black and awful seas?

ATHÉNÉE (*slowly, as she gazes at him yearningly*)

I love you!

MACHAULT (*looking at THE POMPADOUR*)

See, marquise—you did not know—she loves me. Ah, this is love—and I forgot such love for you! (*To ATHÉNÉE, looking into her eyes*) Forgive me. Teach me faith and hope again, dear Athénée. Your love must be my sunlight now—your love, my brave Athénée!

As MACHAULT speaks the last words, they go slowly out, his arm around ATHÉNÉE. THE POMPADOUR stands before seat with clenched hands. She watches them longingly, until they disappear; then, her head droops, she moans, and sinks back on the seat.

THE POMPADOUR (*in a whisper of agony*)  
Machault! Machault!

ATHÉNÉE (*stealing back hastily to her side*)

You taught me a lesson to-night, marquise—a lesson of mercy. Forgive me!

THE POMPADOUR (*bitterly*)

You taught me a lesson—mine comes too late.

ATHÉNÉE gazes at her in pity, lifts the corner of her cloak, kisses it, and hurries out. THE POMPADOUR remains in an attitude of profound grief. The moonlight pours over her, white and cold. Some rose-petals flutter around her. The king's letter hangs in her listless hand.

D'ARGENSON (*entering from the left*)

Marquise, your chair awaits you. (*She does not stir. He goes nearer.*) Marquise—

She does not move or speak. He retreats slowly and silently backward, like one who has intruded in a sanctuary, and goes out. THE POMPADOUR sits alone in the moonlight, a rigid picture of despair. The night wind, which has been growing stronger, now sends a flood of rose-petals through the cold radiance over her bowed head.

CURTAIN.



## ENCHANTMENT

LOVE brewed a potion for my lips to drink,  
Compounded of strange spices, subtly blent,  
And poppy-seeds, whereon the sun had spent  
His lavish gold; pomegranates from the brink  
Of Southern streams; and roses, dewy pink  
As early sunset. Wistfully, he bent  
And bade me not refuse his sacrament,  
Nor from the wonder of its fragrance shrink.

I drank, and broke the goblet at Love's shrine  
To consecrate my service. Unafraid,  
I leaned to take his kiss in fee for mine,  
And met his eyes . . . On some far world are laid  
Shadows and dull despair and misery.  
I know them not—Love brewed a drink for me!

CHARLOTTE BECKER.

## PSEUDONYMS

MY love for Alice I attest  
 By giving heed to all her whims;  
 Just now she likes to be addressed  
 In Pseudonyms.

And so I call her "Rose"—her claim  
 To be a "Beauty" is complete;  
 And she by any other name  
 Would be as sweet.

She's "Opportunity," to-day,  
 For has she not a slender waist?  
 And Opportunity, they say,  
 Should be embraced.

"Necessity" I sometimes style  
 My dear, for though she finds the flaw  
 In any plea that Love may file,  
 She knows no law.

My list of pseudonyms includes  
 "Delay," and I describe her thus  
 Because, at times, in certain moods,  
 She's dangerous.

The débutantes her power dread,  
 She holds so many hearts in thrall;  
 I call her "Labor"—Labor's said  
 To conquer all.

And "April" fits her, though I fear  
 She'd frown to know I write her down:  
 "The spoilt darling of the year"—  
 And of the town!

FRANK ROE BATCHELDER.



## SPECIFICATIONS

CLERK—What kind of hammock do you wish?  
 SUMMER GIRL—It needn't be double size, but it must be double strength.



PASTOR—I never see you in church, sir.  
 CASTLETON—Nor I you!

# OLD CAPULET'S DAUGHTER

By James Branch Cabell

“**B**Y Jove!” said Mr. Townsend, in a voice that shook a little. “She—she—she’s a stunner!” he jolted out, as he proceeded to applaud, vigorously, with both hands and feet. “And who’d have thought it—good Lord, who’d have thought it!”

Mr. Charteris smiled, in a rather patronizing fashion. “A beautiful woman,” he conceded, with his customary drawl—“a very beautiful woman, in fact, but entirely lacking in temperament.”

“Temperament!” scoffed Mr. Townsend, hotly; “what’s temperament to two eyes like that? Why, they’re big as tennis-balls! And her voice—why, a violin—a very superior violin—if it could talk, would have just such a voice as that woman has! Temperament!—oh, you make me ill, Charteris! Why—why, man, just look at her!” said Townsend, conclusively.

Mr. Charteris looked. The Juliet of the evening stood before the curtain, smiling, bowing to right and left. The citizens of Fairhaven were applauding her with a certain conscientious industry, for they really found “Romeo and Juliet” a rather dull couple. The general opinion, however, was that Miss Montmorenci seemed an elegant actress, and that in some interesting play, like “The Two Orphans” or “Lady Audley’s Secret,” she would be well worth seeing. Upon those who had witnessed the opening evening, she had made a most favorable impression in “The Lady of Lyons;” and, at the Tuesday matinée, as Lady Isabel in “East Lynne,” she had wrung the souls of her hearers, and

had brought forth every handkerchief in the house. Moreover, she was very good-looking—quite the lady, some said; and, after all, one cannot expect everything for twenty-five cents; considering which things, Fairhaven applauded her with fervor, and made due allowance for Shakespeare as being a classic, and, therefore, of course, commendable, but not necessarily interesting.

“Well?” queried Mr. Townsend, when she had vanished, speaking under cover of the orchestra—a courtesy title accorded a very ancient and very feeble piano—“what do you think of her—of her looks? Hang her temperament!” he ejaculated, hastily.

Mr. Charteris assumed a most virtuous expression. “I don’t dare tell you,” said he; “you forget I am a married man.”

Townsend frowned slightly. He rather resented Charteris’s flippant allusion to his wife, whom he considered, with some reason, to be vastly too good for him. However, Charteris was his host, and it was Charteris who had suggested, as a lark, their walking over from Willoughby Hall, where he was entertaining a house-party, to witness this performance of the Imperial Dramatic Company. Oh, beyond doubt, Charteris had his good points, thought Mr. Townsend.

To think he had come near remaining with the others—for bridge! He decided he had never cared for bridge. How on earth could presumably sensible people be content to coop themselves up in a drawing-room on a warm June evening, when not two

miles off there was a woman with perfectly unfathomable eyes and a voice that was a love-song? Of course, she couldn't act, but, then, who wanted her to act? Mr. Townsend demanded, indignantly, of his soul. One simply wanted to look at her, and hear her speak. Charteris, with his prattle about temperament, was an ass; when a woman is born with such eyes and with a voice like that, she has done her full duty by the world—all one has a right to expect of her. It was impossible, of course, that she was really as beautiful as she seemed—probably no woman was quite so beautiful as that; most of it was undoubtedly due to rouge and rice-powder and the foot-lights; but one couldn't well be mistaken about the voice. She was apparently not very intelligent—naturally not; what could one look for in a third-rate actress—in a barn-stormer? Off the stage, she was probably forty and partial to brandy.

Mr. Townsend consulted his programme. It informed him in large type at the end that Juliet was "old Capulet's daughter," and that the part was played by Miss Annabelle Alys Montmorenci.

Townsend sighed. He admitted to himself that from a woman who willfully assumed such a name little could be hoped. Still, he would like to see her off the stage—without all those gaudy fripperies and gewgaws—merely from curiosity. Oh, of course, merely from curiosity, he hastily assured himself.

Yet how out of place she seemed among those tawdry, ranting people yonder!—and, oh, how hopeless her acting was!

"A most enjoyable performance," said Mr. Charteris, as they came out of the opera house. "I have always had a sneaking liking for burlesque."

Thereupon, he rather maliciously paused to present Townsend to Mrs. Felix Rabbet, wife to the rector of Fairhaven.

"Such a sad play," she chirped, "and, I fear, sadly demoralizing in its

effects on young people. No, of course, I didn't *think* of bringing the children, Mr. Charteris—Shakespeare's language is not always sufficiently obscure, you know, to make that safe. Ah, poor Shakespeare!" she went on, secure in the knowledge of the four pages she had read that afternoon, preparatory to the evening's outing; "so sad to think of his having been a drinking man! It quite depresses me to think of him hobnobbing with Dr. Johnson at the Tabard Inn, and making such irregular marriages, and stealing sheep—or was it sheep, now? Well, at any rate, it was something extremely deplorable and characteristic of genius, and I quite feel for his wife. Ah, if he had only taken a more serious view of life!—as it is, one absolutely cannot trust him." She sighed pityingly, and endeavored to remember whether it was "Ingomar" or "Hamlet" that Shakespeare wrote. She was not quite certain. "However," she concluded, "they play 'Ten Nights in a Bar-room' on Thursday, and I shall certainly bring the children then, for I am always glad for them to see a really good and uplifting play. Little dears!—I really must tell you what Tom said about actors the other day——"

And she did. This led naturally to Matilda's recent clever comments on George Washington, and her observations as to the rector's dog, and her personal opinion of Elisha. And so on, in a manner not unfamiliar to fond parents. Mrs. Rabbet said afterward that it was a most enjoyable chat, though to Townsend it appeared to partake rather of the nature of a monologue. It consumed perhaps a half-hour, and when the two gentlemen at last relinquished her to her husband's charge, it was with a feeling not altogether unakin to relief.

They walked slowly down Fairhaven's one street. Willoughby Hall lies some little distance out from the village proper, and the nearest route from the opera house led through the major part of Fairhaven, which, after



an evening of unwonted dissipation, was now largely employed in discussing the play, and turning the cat out for the night. The houses were mostly dark, and the moon, nearing its full, silvered row after row of blank windows. There was an odor of growing things about, for in Fairhaven, the gardens are many.

Then it befell that Mr. Townsend made a sudden exclamation.

"Eh?" said Mr. Charteris.

"Why—why, nothing," his companion explained, lucidly. And for all Mr. Charteris could see, this might have been the case.

It may be mentioned, however, that they were, at this moment, passing a tall hedge of box, set about a large garden. The hedge was perhaps five feet, six, in height; Mr. Charteris was also five feet, six; whereas Mr. Townsend was an unusually tall young man, and topped his host by a good seven or eight inches.

"I—I say," Townsend observed, after a little, "I—I'm all out of cigarettes. I'll go back to the drug-store," he suggested, seized with a happy thought, "and get some. It's still open. Don't think of waiting for me," he urged, considerably.

"Why, great heavens!" Mr. Charteris ejaculated; "take one of mine. I can recommend them, I assure you—and, at any rate, there are all sorts, I fancy, at the house. They only keep the rankest kind of Virginia tobacco yonder, you know."

"I prefer it," Townsend insisted—"oh, yes, I really prefer it. So much milder and more wholesome, you know. I never smoke any other sort. My—my doctor insists on my smoking the very rankest I can get. It—it's so much better for the heart, he says—you don't smoke so much of it, you know. Besides," he concluded, virtuously, "it's so much cheaper; you can get twenty cigarettes for five cents at some places. I—I really must economize, I think."

Mr. Charteris turned, and with great care stared in every direction. He discovered nothing unusual. "Very

well!" assented Mr. Charteris; "I, too, have an eye for bargains. I will go with you."

"If you do," quoth Mr. Townsend, honestly, "I'll be—something unpleasant."

Charteris grinned. "Immoral young rip!" said he; "I warn you, before entering the ministry, Mr. Rabbet was accounted a good shot."

"Get out!" said Townsend.

And the fervor of his utterance was such that Mr. Charteris proceeded to obey. "Don't be late for breakfast, if you can help it," he urged, kindly. "Of course, though, you are up to some new form of insanity, and I shall probably be sent for in the morning, to bail you out of the lock-up."

Thereupon, he turned on his heel, and went down the deserted street, singing sweetly.

Sang Mr. Charteris:

"Curly gold locks cover foolish brains,  
Billing and cooing is all your cheer,  
Sighing and singing of midnight strains  
Under Bonnybells' window-panes.  
Wait till you've come to forty year.

"Forty times over let Michaelmas pass,  
Grizzling hair the brain doth clear;  
Then you know the boy is an ass,  
Then you know the worth of a lass,  
Once you have come to forty year."

## II

LEFT to himself, Mr. Townsend began to retrace his steps. Solitude appeared to have mitigated his craving for tobacco in a very surprising manner; indeed, a casual observer might have thought it completely forgotten, for he now walked with a curious leisure. When he had come again to the box-hedge his pace had degenerated, little by little, into an aimless lounge. Mr. Townsend was, to all appearances, rapt in admiration of the beauty of the night.

Followed a strange chance. There was only the mildest breeze about; it was barely audible among the leaves above; and yet—so unreliable are the breezes of still, Summer nights—with a sudden, tiny, almost imperceptible

outburst, this treacherous breeze lifted Mr. Townsend's hat from his head, and wafted it over the hedge of trim box-bushes. It was very strange and very unfortunate, for, as has been said, the hedge was a tall and sturdy one. Townsend now peeped over it, with disconsolate countenance.

"Beastly awkward," said he, meditatively; "I'd give a great deal to know how I'm going to get it back without breaking down the da—blessed thing, and rousing the house, and being taken for a burglar or a madman. I wonder if there's a gate?"

"It is terrible," assented a contralto voice; "but if gentlemen *will* venture abroad on such terrible nights——"

"Eh?" said Mr. Townsend. He looked up quickly at the moon; then back toward the possessor of the voice. It was rather peculiar that he had not noticed her before, for she sat on a rustic bench not fifteen feet away, and in full view of the street. It was, perhaps, the strangeness of the affair that was accountable for the great wonder in Townsend's face, the little tremor that woke in his speech.

"—so windy," she complained.

"Er—ah—yes, quite so!" he agreed, hastily.

"I—I am really afraid"—with a suspicious gurgle—"that it must be a tornado. Ah," she continued, some strong emotion catching at her voice, "heaven help all poor souls at sea! How the wind must whistle through the cordage, how the—the marlingspikes must quiver, and the good ship reel on such a night!" She looked up at a cloudless sky, and sighed. Then she gurgled.

"Er—h'm!" observed Mr. Townsend.

For she had come forward and had lifted his hat toward him, and he could see her very plainly now; and his mouth was making foolish sounds, and his heart was performing certain curious and varied gymnastics that could not, by any stretch of the imagination, be included among its proper duties, and that interfered sadly with his breathing.

"Didn't I know it—didn't I know it?" Mr. Townsend demanded, of his soul, and his pulses sang a riotous pæan; "I knew, with that voice, she couldn't be a common actress—a vulgar, raddled creature out of a barn! You, not a lady! Nonsense! Why—why, you're unbelievable, unthinkable! Oh, you great, wonderful, lazy woman, you are probably very stupid, and you certainly can't act, but your eyes are black velvet, and your voice is evidently stolen from a Cremona, and as for your hair, there must be pounds of it, and, altogether, you ought to be set up on a pedestal for men to worship! There is just one other woman in the whole wide world as beautiful as you are, and she is two thousand years old, and is securely locked up in the Louvre, and belongs to the French government, and, besides, she hasn't any arms, so that even there you have the advantage!"

And, indeed, Miss Annabelle Alys Montmorenci was of much the same large, calm type as the Venus of Milo, nor were the upper part of their faces dissimilar. Miss Montmorenci's lips, however, were far more curved, more buxom, and were, at the present moment, bordered by an absolutely bewildering assemblage of dimples which the statue may not boast.

"I really think," said Miss Montmorenci, judicially, "that it would now be far better for you to seek some shelter from this—this devastating wind. It really isn't safe, you know, in the open. You—you might be swept away, just—just as your hat was." Ensued another gurgle.

"The shelter of a tree—" began Mr. Townsend, looking doubtfully into the garden.

"The very thing," she assented. "There is a splendid oak yonder, just half a block up the street," and she graciously pointed it out.

Townsend regarded it with disapproval. "Such a rickety old tree," he objected, sulkily.

Followed a silence. She bent her head to one side, and looked up at him. She was grave now. "A strolling ac-

tress isn't supposed to be very particular, is she?" asked Miss Montmorenci, slowly. "She wouldn't object to a man's coming by night and trying to scrape acquaintance with her—a man who wouldn't think of being seen with her by day? She'd like it, probably. She—she'd probably be accustomed to it, wouldn't she?" And Miss Montmorenci smiled.

And Townsend saw, with a great pang, that there were tears in her eyes, and, of a sudden, was abjectly ashamed of himself. "Why—why, you can't think that of me!" he babbled. "I—oh, don't think me that sort, I beg of you! I'm not—really, I'm not, Miss Montmorenci! But I admired you so much to-night—I—oh, of course, I was very silly and very presumptuous, but, really, you know—" He paused for a little, and a new light came into his eyes. "My name is Robert Townsend," he said, simply; "I'm staying at Mr. Charteris's place, just outside of Fairhaven. So now, you see, we've been quite properly introduced, haven't we? And, by the way," continued Mr. Townsend, after a moment's meditation, "there's a very interesting old college here—old pictures, records, historical associations and such-like. I should like to see it, vastly. Can't I call for you in the morning? We can do it together, if you don't mind, and if you haven't already seen it. Won't you, Miss Montmorenci? You really ought to see King's College, you know," he added, severely; "it's quite famous—no end of interesting things have happened there, I'm told."

She had drawn close to the hedge. "You—you really mean it?" she asked. "You'd really walk through the streets of Fairhaven with me—with a barn-stormer, with a strolling actress? You'd be afraid!" she cried, suddenly; "oh, yes, you talk bravely enough, but you'd be afraid, of course, when the time came! You'd be afraid!"

Mr. Townsend had taken his hat, but his head was still uncovered. "I don't think," said he, reflectively, "that I am afraid of many things, somehow. But of one thing I am cer-

tainly not afraid, and that is, of mistaking a good woman for—for anything else. Their—their eyes are different, somehow," Mr. Townsend explained, slowly, as to himself; then smiled. "Shall we say eleven o'clock?"

Miss Montmorenci laid her hand upon his shoulder. "I believe you," she said, in flushed haste, "oh, I believe you, and I trust you, Mr. Townsend! But—but we rehearse in the morning, and there is a *matinée* every day, you know, and—and there are other reasons—" She paused, irresolutely. "No," said Miss Montmorenci, "I thank you, but—good night."

"Oh, I say," he pleaded, "am I never to see any more of you?"

A century or so of silence now. Her deliberation seemed endless.

At last: "*Matinées* and rehearsal keep us busy by day. But I am boarding here for the week, and—and I rest here in the garden after the evening performance. It is cool and—yes, soothing. And—and you aren't a bad man, are you? No; you look too big and strong and clean, Mr. Townsend. A—even a strolling actress would trust you," she ended, handsomely, and gurgled once more.

"In that case," cried Mr. Townsend, "I shall say good night with a light heart." And he turned to go.

"A moment—" said she.

"An eternity," he protested.

"Promise me," she said, almost harshly, "that you will not come again to the opera house."

Townsend raised his brows. "I adore the drama," he pleaded.

"And I loathe it. And I act very badly—hopelessly so," said Miss Montmorenci, with an indolent shrug; "and—and, somehow, I don't want you to see me do it."

He promised. "At least," he implored, "you don't mind my—remembering Juliet?"

"No"—doubtfully, though.

"In that case," quoth Mr. Townsend, promptly, "Juliet shall be remembered—always." He smiled, and waved his hand. "Adieu, Signorina Capulet," said he.

And Mr. Townsend took his departure. His blood rejoiced, with a strange fervor, in the Summer moonlight. It was good to be alive.

### III

"AND, oh, but it's good to be with you again, signorina!" cried Mr. Townsend, as he came with quick strides into the moonlit garden. He caught both her hands in his, and laughed like a boy. There was nothing subtle about Townsend; just at present, he was vastly pleased with the universe, and he saw no possible reason for concealing it.

It was characteristic, also, that she made no pretense at being surprised by his coming. She was expecting him very frankly, and she smiled very frankly at seeing him; also, in place of the street dress of Tuesday, she wore something that was white and soft and clinging, and left her throat but half concealed. This, for two reasons, was very sensible and praiseworthy; one being that the night was warm, and the other that it really broadened Townsend's ideas as to the state of perfection which it is possible for the human throat to attain.

"So you don't like my—my stage-name?" she asked, as he sat down beside her. "Well, for that matter, no more do I."

"It doesn't suit you," he protested—"not in the least. Whereas, you might be a Signorina Somebody-or-other, you know. You're dark and stately and—well, I can't tell you all the things you are," Mr. Townsend complained, "because the English language is so limited. But, upon the whole, I'm willing to take the word of the playbill—yes, I'm quite willing to accept you as Signorina Capulet. She had a habit of sitting in gardens, at night, I remember. Yes," he decided, after reflection, "I really think it highly probable that you're old Capulet's daughter. I shall make a point of it, to pick a quarrel with that impertinent, trespassing young Mon-

tague as soon as possible. He really doesn't deserve you, you know."

Unaccountably, her face saddened. Then: "Signorina, signorina?" said she, at length. "It's rather a pretty name. And the other is horrible. Yes, you may call me signorina, if you like."

She would not tell him her real name. She was unmarried—this much she told him, but of her past life, her profession or of her future she never spoke. "I don't want to talk about it," she said, candidly. "We play for a week in Fairhaven, and here, once off the stage, I intend to forget I am an actress. When I'm on the stage," she added, in meditative wise, "of course, every one knows I'm not."

Townsend laughed. He found her very satisfying; she was not particularly intelligent, perhaps, but, then, he was beginning to consider clever women rather objectionable creatures. There was a sufficiency of them among the Charteris house-party—Alicia Wade, Margaret Hugonin, Gabrielle Anstruther—he thought of them almost resentfully. The world had accorded them—well, not exactly what they most wanted, but, at least, they had its luxuries; and they said sharp, cynical things about the world in return. In a woman's mouth, epigrams were quite as much out of place as a meerschaum pipe.

Here, on the contrary, was a woman whom the world had accorded nothing save hard knocks, and she regarded it, upon the whole, as an eminently pleasant place to live in. She accepted its rebuffs with a certain large calm, as being all in a day's work. There was, no doubt, some good and sufficient reason for them; however, not for a moment did she puzzle her handsome head in speculating over this reason. She was probably too lazy. And the few favors the world accorded her she took thankfully.

"You see," she explained to Townsend—this was on Thursday night, when he found her very contentedly eating sweetmeats out of a paper bag—"the world is really very like a large

chocolate-drop; it's rather bitter on the outside, but when you've bitten through, you find the heart of it sweet. Oh, how greedy!—you've taken the last candied cherry, and I'm specially fond of candied cherries!" And, indeed, she looked frankly regretful as Townsend munched it.

Townsend thought her adorable.

In fact, the moon seemed to shine down each night upon that particular garden in a more and more delightful and dangerous manner. And being a perfectly normal, healthy young man, the said moonshine affected Mr. Townsend in a fashion that has been peculiar to moonshine since Noah was a likely stripling; and Mr. Townsend's blood appeared, to him, to leap and bubble in his veins as if it had been some notably invigorating and heady tippie; and his heart was unreasonably contented, and he gave due thanks for this woman who had come to him unsullied through the world's gutter—unsullied, look you; there was no questioning that. He pictured her as the Lady in "Comus," moving serene and unafraid among a rabble of threatening, bestial shapes. And he rejoiced that there were women like that in the world—brave, wholesome, unutterably honest women, whose very lack of cleverness—oh, subtle appeal to his vanity!—demanded a man's protection. As has been said, Townsend was a tall man, but when he thought in this fashion, he seemed to himself, at a moderate computation, ten feet in height—just the man, in short, to make an ideal protector.

Thus far, Mr. Townsend. His course of reasoning was perhaps faulty, but then, there are, upon the whole, certain incidents in life more interesting and desirable than the perfecting of a mathematical demonstration. And so, for a little, his blood rejoiced with a strange fervor in the Summer moonlight, and it was good to be alive.

Friday.

"And why not?" Mr. Townsend demanded for the ninth time.

But she was resolute. "Oh, it's dear of you! it's dear of you!" she cried; "and I—I do care for you, Bobby—how could I help it? But it can't be—it can't ever be," she repeated, wearily; and then looked at him and smiled a little. "Oh, boy, boy! dear, dear boy!" she murmured, half in wonder, "how foolish of you and—and how dear of you, Bobby!"

"And why not?" said Mr. Townsend—for the tenth time.

She gave a sobbing laugh. "Oh, the great, brave, stupid boy!" she said, fondly, and, for a moment, her hand rested on his curling hair; "he doesn't know what he's doing—ah, no, he doesn't know what he's doing! Why, I might hold you to your word, Bobby! I might sue you for breach of promise! I—I might marry you, Bobby! Think of that!" and her eyes grew big and moist as she herself thought of it. "Why—why, I'm not even a lady, Bobby! I'm only a strolling actress—a barn-stormer, Bobby, and—and fair game for any man—any man who isn't particular," she added, with the first trace of bitterness he had ever heard in her great voice. "And you'd marry me—you! You'd give me your name, you'd make me your—your wife! You—you've actually begged me to be your wife, haven't you, Bobby? Ah, my brave, strong, stupid Bobby, how many women must love you—women who are your equals, women who have a right to love you! And you'd give them all up for me—for me, you foolish Bobby, whom you haven't known a week! Ah, how—how dear of you!" and she caught her breath swiftly, and her voice broke.

"Yes," confessed Mr. Townsend; "I really believe I'd give them all up—every blessed one of them—for you." He inspected her, critically, and then smiled. "And I don't think," added Mr. Townsend, "that I'd be deserving any very great credit, either, signorina."

"Ah, my dear," she answered, "it pleases you to call me old Capulet's daughter—but if I were only a Capulet, and you a Montague, don't you



see how much easier it would be? But we don't belong to rival families, Bobby—we belong to rival worlds, to two worlds that have nothing in common, and never can have anything in common. They're too strong for us, Bobby—my big, dark, squalid world, that you could never sink to, and your gay little world that I can never climb to—your world that would have none of me, even if—even if—" The condition was not forthcoming.

"The world," said Townsend, in an equable tone, "may be—my dear, I may as well warn you I'm shockingly given to short and expressive terms, and, as we're likely to see a deal of each other for the future, you'll have to be lenient with them—accordingly, I repeat, the world may be damned!" Townsend laughed, in unutterable content. "Have none of you!" he cried. "My faith, I'd like to see the world that would have none of you! Ah, signorina, it's very plain to me you don't realize what a beauty, what a—a—good Lord, what an unimaginative person it was that invented the English language! Why, you've only to be seen, heart's dearest—only to be seen, and the world is at your feet—my world, to which you belong of rights—my world, that you're going to honor by living in; my world, that in a little will go mad for sheer envy of blundering, stupid, lucky me!" And Mr. Townsend laughed her to scorn.

There was a long silence. Then: "I—I belonged to your world once, you know."

"I know," said Mr. Townsend, gravely.

"And yet—you never asked——"

"Ah, signorina, signorina!" he cried; "what matter? Don't I know you for the bravest, tenderest, purest, most beautiful woman God ever made? I doubt you—I! My word!" said Mr. Townsend, stoutly, "that would be a pretty go! You're to tell me just what you please," he went on, almost belligerently, "and when and where you please, my lady. And I'll thank you," he added, with some sternness, "to discontinue your pitiful and transpar-

ent efforts to arouse unworthy suspicions as to my future wife. They're wasted, madame—utterly wasted, I assure you."

"Oh, Bobby, Bobby!" she sighed; "you are hopeless! Give me time," she pleaded, weakly.

Townsend scowled his disapproval.

"Only till to-morrow—only a little, little twenty-four hours. And promise me, you won't speak of this—this mad scheme again to-night. I—I must think."

"Never!" said he, promptly, decisively. "I couldn't be expected to keep such an absurd promise," he complained, in indignation.

"And you look so strong," she murmured, with evident disappointment—"so strong and firm and—and—admirable!"

Mr. Townsend promised at once. And he kept his promise—that is, he did subsequently refer to the preferable and proper course to pursue under divers given circumstances "when we are married;" but it was only on six occasions, and then quite casually—and six times, as he himself said, was, all things being considered, an extremely moderate allowance and one that did great credit to his self-control.

My dear Mrs. Grundy, I grant you it is utterly impossible to defend Mr. Townsend's behavior in this matter, and, believe me, I don't for an instant undertake the task. To the contrary, I agree with you perfectly—his conduct is most thoughtless and reprehensible, and merits our very severest condemnation.

For, look you: here is a young man, well-born, well-bred, sufficiently well endowed with this world's goods, in short, an eminently eligible match, preparing to marry an obscure actress of whose past he knows nothing—absolutely nothing. Don't you shudder at the effrontery of the minx? Is it not heart-breaking to contemplate the folly, the utter infatuation of the misguided youth, who now stands ready to foist such a creature upon the very circles of which your ladyship is a distin-

guished ornament? I protest, it is really incredible. I don't believe a word of the story.

But, you see, he loved her. You and I, my dear madame, blessed with a wiser estimation of our duties to society, of the responsibilities of our position, of the cost of even the most modest establishment, and, above all, of the sacredness of matrimony and the main chance, may well shrug our shoulders at such a plea. For, as you justly observe, what, after all, is this love?—only a passing madness, an exploded superstition, an irresponsible *ignis fatuus* flickering over the quagmires and shallows of the divorce-court. People's lives are no longer swayed by such absurdities; it is quite out of date.

And I protest, loudly, my hand upon my heart, that it is true: people no longer do mad things for love, or ever did, in spite of lying poets; nor do the birds mate in the Spring, nor the sun rise in the morning; popular fallacies, my dear madame, every one of them. You and I know better, and are not to be deceived by appearances, however specious they may be.

Having attained this satisfactory state, we can afford to laugh at our past mistakes. Let us be candid. Wasn't there a time, dear lady, before Mr. Grundy came a-wooing, when, somehow, one was constantly meeting unexpected people in the garden, and, somehow, one sat out a formidable number of dances during the evening, and, somehow, the poets seemed a bit more plausible than they do to-day? It was very foolish, of course—but, ah, madame, there *was* a time—a time when even our staid blood rejoiced with a strange fervor in the Summer moonlight, and it was good to be alive!

#### IV

TOWNSEND approached the garden on Saturday night, with an elated heart. This was the last evening of the engagement of the Imperial Dramatic Company. To-morrow the troupe was to leave Fairhaven; but

Mr. Townsend was very confident that the leading lady would not accompany them, and by reason of this confidence, he smiled as he strode through the village, and hummed under his breath an inane ditty of an extremely sentimental nature.

As he bent over the little wooden gate, and searched for its elusive latch, a man came out of the garden, wheeling sharply about the hedge that, until this, had hidden him; simultaneously, Mr. Townsend was aware of the mingled odor of bad tobacco and of worse whiskey. Well, she would have done with such people soon! Townsend threw open the gate, and stood aside to let him pass; then, as the moon fell full upon the face of the man, he gave an inarticulate, startled sound.

"Fine evening, sir," suggested the stranger.

"Eh?" said Mr. Townsend; "eh? Oh, yes, yes! Quite so!" Afterward, he shrugged his shoulders, and went into the garden, looking a bit puzzled.

He found her beneath a great maple in the heart of the enclosure. It was a place of peace; the night was warm and windless, and the moon, come to its full glory now, rode lazily in the west through a froth of clouds. Everywhere the heavens were faintly powdered with star-dust, but even the planets seemed pale and ineffectual beside the splendor of the moon. The garden was drenched in moonshine—moonshine that silvered the un-mown grass-plots, and converted the white rose-bushes into squat-figured wraiths, and tinged the red ones with dim purple hues. On every side, the foliage blurred into ambiguous vistas, where fireflies loitered; and the long shadows of the nearer trees, straining across the grass, were weird patterns scissored out of blue velvet. It was a place of peace and light and languid odors, and Mr. Townsend came into it, laughing, the possessor of an over-industrious heart and a perfectly unreasoning joy over the fact that he was alive.

"I say," Townsend observed, as he

stretched himself luxuriantly on the grass beside her, "you put up at a shockingly disreputable place, signorina."

"Yes?" said she.

"That fellow who just went out," he explained—"do you know, the police want his address, I think? No," Townsend continued, after consideration, "I'm sure I'm not mistaken—that's either Ned Lethbury, the embezzler, or his twin-brother. It's been six years since I've seen him, but that's he. And that," said Mr. Townsend, with proper severity, "is a sample of the sort of associate you prefer to your humble servant! Ah, signorina, signorina, I'm a tolerably worthless chap, I admit, but at least I never forged and embezzled and then skipped my bail! You'd much better marry me, my dear, and say good-bye to your speculating friends. But, deuce take it!" he broke off, suddenly, "I forgot—I ought to notify the police or something, I suppose. I wonder if there *are* any police in this dear old sleepy place?"

She caught his arm, quickly. Her mouth opened and shut again before she spoke. "He—he's my husband," she said, in a toneless voice. Then, of a sudden, she wailed; "Oh, forgive me! Oh, my great, strong, beautiful Bobby, forgive me, for I am very unhappy, and I can't meet your eyes—your honest eyes! Ah, my dear, my dear, don't look at me like that—you don't know how it—it hurts!"

The garden noises lisped about them in the long silence that fell. Then the far-off whistling of some home-going citizen of Fairhaven tinkled shrilly through the night, and Townsend shuddered a bit.

"I don't understand," he said, strangely quiet. "You told me——"

"Ah, I lied to you! I lied to you!" she cried. "I didn't mean to—to hurt you, Bobby. I didn't know—I couldn't know—I was so lonely, Bobby," she pleaded, with wide eyes; "oh, you don't know how lonely I am. And when you came to me that first night, you—why, you spoke to

me as the men I—I once knew used to speak. There was respect in your voice, and, oh, Bobby, Bobby, I wanted that so! I hadn't had a man speak to me like that for years, you know, Bobby. And, boy dear, I was so lonely in my squalid world—and it seemed as if the world I used to know was calling me—your world, Bobby, the world I'm shut out from. And I thought for a week—just to peep into it, to be a lady again for a little seven days—oh, it didn't seem very wicked, then, and I wanted it so much! I—I knew I could trust you. And I was so hungry—so hungry for a little respect, a little courtesy, Bobby, such as men don't accord strolling actresses. So I didn't tell you till the very last I was married. I lied to you. Oh, you don't understand!" she babbled; "this stupid, honest man doesn't understand anything except that I've lied to him!"

"Signorina," said Townsend, and smiled, resolutely, "I think I understand." He took both her hands in his, and laughed a little. "But, oh, my dear, my dear," he said, "you should have told me that you loved another man; for you have let me love you for a week, and now I think that I must love you till I die."

"Love him!" she echoed. "Oh, boy dear, boy dear, what a Galahad it is! I don't think he ever loved me; and I—why, you have seen him. How could I love him?" she asked, simply as a child.

Townsend bowed his head. "And yet—" said he. Then he laughed again, somewhat bitterly. "Don't deceive me, Mrs. Lethbury," he said; "it's kindly meant, I know, but I remember you now. I even danced with you once, I think, a long time ago. You're Alfred Van Orden's daughter—your father is a wealthy man, a very wealthy man—and yet, when your—your husband disappeared you followed him to—to become a strolling actress. Ah, no, a woman doesn't sacrifice everything for a man in the way you've done, unless she loves him." Mr. Townsend caught his breath

sharply. Some unknown force kept tugging down the corners of his mouth, in a manner that hampered speech; moreover, nothing seemed worth talking about. He had lost her. That was the one thing that mattered.

"Why, of course, I went with him," she assented, a bit surprised; "he was my husband, you know. But as for loving—no, I don't think Ned ever really loved me," she reflected, with puckering brows. "He—he took that money for—for another woman, if you remember. But he's fond of me, and—and he needs me." After a little, she went on, with a quick lift of speech. "Oh, Bobby, Bobby, what a queer life we've led since then! You can't imagine it, boy dear. He's been a tavern-keeper, a drummer—everything! Why, one Summer we actually sold rugs and Turkish things in Atlantic City! But he's always afraid of meeting some one who knows him, and—and he drinks too much. So we haven't got on in the world, Ned and I—and now, after six years, I'm the leading lady of the Imperial Dramatic Company, and he's the manager. I forgot, though—he's advance-agent this week, for he didn't dare stay in Fairhaven, lest some of the people at Mr. Charteris's should recognize him, you know. He came back only this evening." She paused for a moment; a wistful little quiver came into her speech. "Oh, it's queer, it's queer, Bobby! Sometimes—sometimes when I've time to think, say, on long Sunday afternoons, I remember my old life, every bit of it—oh, I do remember such strange little details, Bobby! I remember the designs on the bread-and-butter plates, and all the little silver things on my desk, and the plank by my door that always creaked and somehow never got fixed, and the big, shiny buttons on the coachman's coat—little trifles like that. And—and they hurt, they hurt, Bobby, those little, unimportant things! They—they grip my throat!" She laughed, not very mirthfully. "Then I'm like the old lady in the

nursery-rhyme, Bobby, and say, surely, this can't be I. But it is I, boy dear—a strolling actress, a barn-stormer! Isn't it queer, Bobby?"

Mr. Townsend was remembering many things. He remembered Lethbury, a gross man, superfluously genial, whom he had never liked; he even remembered his young wife, not come to her full beauty then, the bud of girlhood scarce slipped; and he remembered very vividly the final crash, the nine days' talk over Lethbury's flight in the face of certain conviction—by his father-in-law's advice, as some said, who had furnished and forfeited heavy bail for him. Oh, the brave woman who had followed!—oh, the brave, foolish woman! And he was content to exhibit her to the yokels of Fairhaven!—to make of her beauty an article of traffic! Oh, it was foul!

Then hope blazed in his heart. "Your husband," he said, quickly, "he doesn't love you? He—he isn't faithful to you?"

She was all one blush. "No," she answered; "there's a—a Miss Fortescue—she plays second parts——"

"Ah, my dear, my dear!" he cried, with a shaking voice; "come away, signorina—come away with me! He doesn't need you—and, oh, my dear, I need you so! You can get your divorce and marry me. And you can have your old world back again—the world you're meant for, the life you hunger for, signorina! Ah, signorina, come away—come away from this squalid life that's killing you! Come back to the clean, light-hearted world you loved, the world that's waiting to pet and caress you just as it used to do—our world, signorina! You don't belong here with—with the Fortescues. You belong to us." Townsend sprang to his feet. "Come now!" said he. "There's Anne Charteris; she's a good woman. She knows you. Come with me to her, dearest—to-night! You shall see your father to-morrow. Your father—why, think how that old man loves you, how he has longed for you, his only daughter, all these years. And I?" Townsend spread out his

hands, in a little impotent gesture. "I love you," he said, simply. "I can't do without you, heart's dearest."

Impulsively, she rested both hands upon his breast; then bowed her head a little. The nearness of her seemed to shake in his blood, to catch at his throat, and his hands, lifted for a moment, trembled with desire of her. "You don't understand," she said. "I am a Catholic—my mother was one, you know. There is no divorce for us. And—and besides, I'm not modern. I'm very old-fashioned, I suppose, in my ideas. Do you know," she asked, with a smile on her face that lifted confidently to his, "I—I really believe the world was made in six days, and that the whale swallowed Jonah, and that there is a tangible hell of fire and brimstone? You don't, do you, Bobby? But I do—and I promised to stay with him till death parted us, you know, and I must do it. He—I'm all he has. He'd go all to pieces without me. I—oh, boy dear, boy dear, I love you so!" And her voice broke, in a great, choking sob.

"A promise—a promise made by an ungrown girl to a brute—a thief!"

"No, dear," she answered, quietly, "a promise made to God."

And Townsend, looking into her face, saw love there and anguish and determination. It seemed monstrous, but of a sudden he knew with a dull surety; she loved him, but she thought she had no right to love him; she would not go with him. She would go with that drunken, brutish thief. And Mr. Townsend suddenly recalled certain

clever women—Alicia Wade, Margaret Hugonin, Gabrielle Anstruther—the women of the world he knew; beyond question they would raise delicately penciled eyebrows to proclaim this woman a fool—and wonder. They would be right, Townsend thought. She was only a splendid, tender-hearted, bright-eyed fool, the woman that he loved. But he loved her very folly—oh, the brave folly, the sacred stupidity! His heart sickened as it rose between them, an impassable barrier. He hated it; he revered it.

They stood silent for a time. The wind murmured above in the maples, lazily, ominously. Then the gate clicked, with a vicious snap that pierced the silence like a pistol-shot.

"My husband," she said, wearily. "Good-bye, Bobby. You—you may kiss me, if you like."

So, for a moment, their lips met. Afterward, Townsend caught her hands in his, and gripped them close to his breast, looking down into her eyes. They glinted in the moonlight, deep pools of sorrow, and tender—oh, unutterably tender and compassionate. But he found no hope there. He lifted her hand to his lips, and left her alone in the garden.

He found Lethbury fumbling at the gate.

"Such nuisance," he complained, "havin' gate won't unlock. Latch mus' got los'—po' li'l latch," murmured Mr. Lethbury, plaintively—"all 'lone in cruel worl'!"

Townsend opened the gate for him, and stood aside to let him pass.



## FROM CUPID'S QUIVERS

ROMANCES of two worlds are not uncommon—the beau monde and the demi-monde.

When a girl's eyes fall, it is time for the man to take a tumble.

In most men's lives, as in most women's, there is but one real love; the difficulty is to decide which.

Love is blind—so long as there's no money in sight.

L. DE V. MATTHEWMAN.



# THE TWO GRANDFATHERS

By Dora Siegerson

(Mrs. Clement Shorter)

GIVE every man his chance, I say, to find his soul. Those in the higher place may fall, and those cast down may rise.

My grandfather was a pious gentleman, but his son was a wastrel—he squandered his money, and married a kitchen wench, who bore me in the gutter. There I played with the children of vice, and caroused with the parents of sin. What chance had I to know that there was beauty in the world that was pure as the snow—the only pure thing that fell for a moment in our alley? Even the sweet preachers that God has given to man I had never heard, nor the wind over the hills, the murmur of the brook through the fields, the wild, free song of the birds in the trees. I looked up at the clouded blue of the heavens, and wondered why so fair a thing should shine above such a place as ours. Our homes, that held only those who loved to roam by night, were seldom occupied during the day, save by the children.

In the night I crept, as I had thought, after my prey; lone women I jostled, and weak men I overpowered and even robbed, with the other youths of my class. I pushed harder, I searched more thoroughly than my comrades, and when we drank I was the last to leave an empty glass. As I grew older, the game was not big enough for me; I wanted to be called great, even among the lot I lived. This was not love of crime, as I knew later, but ambition. It would have led me in any state of life, and I knew but one.

One night, my first to try a new departure, I stole alone on a big undertaking.

I entered a house in Kensington for the purpose of robbery. I had watched this house for some time, and picked it out for my first effort. It was owned by a rich man—a young man he was—and therefore worth my skill. It was into no helpless place of women and old folk I had gone, but into the house of a man who was no older than myself, and as strong. True, he had servants on his side, and knowledge of his home; but against that I had darkness, night and sleep.

I crept up the little garden with my heart thrilling in its wild purpose. I tried every window and door in the basement, but all were sturdily locked and barred. I crept back and looked up at the house. There was a window beyond my reach, but beside it ran a rain-pipe.

In a moment, I had my mind made up, and laid my hand about the iron. I drew myself toward the window with the aid of a holdfast, that projected from the bricks, and soon was seated upon the narrow sill. I did not think of the difficulty of getting back; all was black beneath me, and the window seemed fast. I took my pen-knife from my pocket and inserted it at the fastening. To my relief and triumph, the bolt slid back. I opened the window gently, and listened. For a moment, I imagined I heard breathing near me, and half prepared to drop from the sill back into the uncertainty of the garden; but, on listening again, I heard nothing.

My heart was beating loudly in its excitement. It was my first great adventure, and I did not know how I would come out of it. If I were

caught, they would rob me of more than I could take from them—my freedom. But there was no sound from the house—it was asleep.

I turned, and hung a foot down inside the window. It touched nothing; still holding the sill I let my body drop until, held by the length of my arms, my toes could just touch the ground. I loosed the hold of my two hands, and dropped—into the arms of a man!

In a second, the place was full of light. I staggered to my feet and stared at him, too astonished to be frightened. He watched me intently a moment, as if afraid I would strike him, or as if he suspected I had a weapon concealed; but murder was never a thought of mine, thank God, and he saw that in my eyes, I suppose, for he turned away and bade me follow. I laughed as he walked the length of the big room I had dropped into, and did not stir, but he turned on me and said, calmly:

"My servants are outside; you cannot run away."

At that, I strode up to where he stood by the mantelpiece, and laughed again as he pointed to an arm-chair, and bade me be seated. I threw myself back in the cushions as if I had been used to such luxury. In truth, my limbs sank into the softness with delicious rest.

"A real, live burglar!" he said, with a smile, gazing down on me. "I've read of such things, now I see one. You're not very formidable, after all," he added, and I flushed angrily. So that was all I gained! I thought of my feelings as I had sat on the sill in the darkness, and imagined myself a wonderfully fine fellow. And to think that I sat now, caught, at the mercy of this youth, who had no fear in his eyes! I it was who felt the fear, because into my heart crept the strange knowledge that this was a place I had heard of but had never seen—a home. I did not think of my loss of freedom for the moment—only my loss of *this*, which had never been mine! Here were rich carpets, warm to the feet,

that made me curl my hateful boots under the chair, ashamed of their rough contrast with such a velvet substance; here a fire that still glowed in the grate; beautiful lights that had only to be touched to turn them to darkness; a table with its load of books and tray of glasses and wine. Outside, I could hear the rain beat against the glass of the heavily curtained windows. Inside were warmth and rest. Outside were cold and hunger, restlessness and storm. What sort of a woman had thrown aside that dainty bit of embroidery, that lay on the little stool beside my chair, I wondered. It was not a girl, for spectacles lay close by. No doubt it was an old lady, similar to many I had seen in the streets of the West End.

"Well," said the young man, looking down at me, "I am glad I caught you, and that you are so young. I am not going to force you into lying by the fear of the law, and of what I may do to you, for I am going to let you go—when we have had our little chat."

I looked at him, surprised. My freedom was very dear to me.

"I want to understand your people," he said, solemnly, "for one day I may have to see a lot of you. My mother"—he glanced at the needlework—"possesses a strong and lovely nature. She has reared me apart from all knowledge of such a life as yours must be; she intends me for the church."

I started at this, for his eyes had none of the patience and self-repression I had seen in the faces of the ministers who sometimes found their way to our slums. They were innocent eyes—to me—eyes that had not yet lived, but passed through life without being disturbed by any great emotions.

"If it had been in my grandfather's days it would be different." He glanced at a portrait set upon the wall above the mantelpiece. I could trace little likeness between them. He smiled. "He, I hear, was a wild, bad man, and this, I suppose, has made my mother more careful and strict with her only son."

I sat bewildered at his flow of words, not sure at what he was aiming.

"Now," he said, "what pleasure is there in your mode of life?"

I did not answer. I knew no other.

"You don't understand," he said, "but what I mean is this: Any man can get on by honesty and labor to better his position, if he has true grit in him. Now, my grandfather was a wild fellow; he squandered all his money, leaving my father only debts and poverty, but he fought against it all, and conquered. It is to my father alone I owe my home and its comforts. That's to show you what a man can do by work. What have you against this?" he said, waving his hand about the room. "Here I am, warm and free from hunger and thirst; friends come if I am lonely. I leave for my work every morning, and come back to comfort and rest in the evening. What have you to put against that, poor boy, whose life is spent in fear and shadow?"

I laughed to hear him talk. "It's your life that has the fear," I said, "with so much to lose within it. I can love only what you have not; that is liberty. You are tied like a goat in a hedge to your own little spot, in the city. All the world is open to me. To-morrow I can walk out of my home, without a regret, without a soul to mourn for me or for whom I may grieve. I can travel, through the labor of my hands, over the earth, always finding warmth and food as I go, as a bird does. I shall go to-morrow to see the world, and I shall see it as you never can, for were you to go, you would be kept away from real living by your ease and comforts and the conventions that make you a gentleman. Are you as free?"

"I could be," he said, restlessly, "if I wished—at least, for a time."

"Yes," I answered, "but your responsibilities would chain you. You cannot be free; your home would call you back, your business and your health would hamper you. You are not free."

"You," he said, a little fiercely, "are in the cold and the night; you are

scorned and suspected; no honest man's home is open to you. You starve, and no one cares."

"I live," I answered. "It is splendid in the night, with the storm in your ears, and danger everywhere. If I lose, well, next time I will gain. If I am cold, how grand is the warmth when it comes, and when one is hungry, how good it is to eat! I go through the darkness with my head on fire; to you, all days are the same, monotonous, but safe. No one scorns me, except the classes that are not my own. Thieves are merry fellows, and I have good comrades. Nothing I do can horrify them, save playing the coward. If you are astray in so small a thing as every fashion, your friends will look askance upon you. Here you are tied again, while I am free."

He walked restlessly up and down the room. "What do you know of the beautiful things of life—the pure lives, the sister, the sweetheart, the mother?" he said. "The eyes of any of these three women whose look makes one proud to be a man, whose touch makes one ashamed of even the little sins that have poured themselves upon us, these dear women who keep us strong, and make us strive to mount even a little way toward their white kingdom—what do you know of this, rugged philosopher?"

"Nothing," I said, fiercely. "What should I want to know of women such as these? I am a man. No prowling priest shall pull my life a woman's way. I shall kneel to no high altar of her white reign. It is I who crack the whip, and my women come, with loud cries and bold glances, to dance at my bidding; and they go when I weary of them. The cats, how they bite and scratch, but all the time their eyes love me and obey."

I saw his hands clench, and a strange light come in his face. In an instant, it died out. His hand went to his collar, as if he already felt a stiff band of thorn about his throat.

"And what of the heavens—are they empty for you, too, poor lad?"

he said, softly; and I laughed aloud, rising and lifting my free arms.

"See," I said, "I am free, free of home, no friends, no loves, no Gods, no devils. I stand alone on the earth. I fear nothing. I have nothing to lose. I want nothing. I am content."

As I spoke, the door opened and an old lady entered. She stood a moment on the threshold, and over her shoulder I saw the face of a beautiful girl, framed with curls.

"Richard," the woman said, "we have waited so long for your step on the stair. You must be weary. Why do you not go to bed? We feared you were ill, it is so long since we left you." She laid her hand tenderly upon his shoulder, while she spoke, and then she turned and saw me, and, hurrying slightly toward me, said: "I did not know you had a visitor, Richard. You will forgive my anxiety, sir; my son has been ill."

I shuffled rather awkwardly to my feet.

"Why do you pry upon me, mother?" he said. "Am I not a free man?" She looked surprised, as if unused to rebuke.

"Of course, dear," she said, humbly, then turned to me as I went stumbling to the door. "It's a dark night for you to travel; are you going out into the storm?"

Her son followed me to the door, and let me into the dark.

"You go into the storm," he sighed, "and I——"

"Good night, bondsman!" I cried, and, shouting, flung my cap into the air, snatching it back from the wind ere it lifted it too high. My laughter was echoed by a woman's voice, and a wild creature thrust her hand into mine. So we went linked into the dark, from the house where I thought he watched with disgusted eyes.

## II

No sooner did I gain the shelter of the shadow, than I thrust the loathsome creature away with a curse.

I crouched down in a hidden place to think. I dared not go back to the "den"—the miserable hovel I called my home—where one was never alone, or in silence. I wept the first tears I ever remembered to have wept, and they burned in my eyes, and rolled their salt down my cheeks. Something seemed to rise within me, and claim me. A great, hungry longing for something that ought by inheritance to be mine, a noble jealousy arose in my heart—jealousy of that young man for his education, his chances to become great among men, the dear memory that bent above him, tender and devoted to him—jealousy of his quiet home. All my wild words rang in my ears—all the haggard words I had lied to him with my life! I did not live; I existed as a beast feeding when I was hungry and lying in the room without thought, like a dog, until I grew hungry to eat again. There was no chance to make me famous unless I committed some great crime on my fellow-men.

I hated the still wind that blew through my thin clothes, and drove me back among the brutes I called comrades—the brutes that never once in my long years with them had uttered a thought that one could call clean, or done a gracious deed or one that was not already a huge crime. Yet why did I wish to be a gentleman—to be one of that class I pretended to despise, that I hated because I felt I had been thrust from among them? "Gentleman John," my comrades called me, jeering at the speech my father had taught me; and now, in the night, it seemed a thought of dear grandfather had come to me, and watched my turmoil of spirit, calling me back to the position that should have been mine had my father not proved a wastrel.

I stood up in the dark, and clenched my hands to heaven. "I will come," I said, "I will come back! I will have a home. I will have a woman with dear eyes. I will have a future, and perhaps"—I lowered my head unconsciously, and spoke reverently—"I

will have a God in those far heavens, if I fight hard."

This I resolved, and because I had strange strength given me, I fought well and conquered. I cast off my old haunts and the vermin that crowded them. I bound myself with hard bonds to the acres of my ambition, and guided my life into narrow ways and quiet places that had no far horizon line. The ox would look upon me as a fellow, and the goat, tied in the hedge, as I, too, was tied by my own bonds.

So, at last, after many years I gained my wishes, and sat by my own fireside, content, hearing the storms in the night, with a shudder, and drawing the curtains close to shut them out. My wife, with dear eyes, looked to me, and I, kneeling, was washed pure at the high altar of the white kingdom of her womanhood. Gentleness now spoke to me as an equal, and met me with respect and even reverence. And, above all, for my peace there came into my soul a strange reverence. When I had gained happiness, I yearned to tell the man who had pointed to me the road.

I sought his house, to show him how I had profited by his kindly teaching. I stood a moment, looking up at the place with gratitude in my heart. Therein dwelt the gentle youth—a priest now, no doubt—and it would be my joy to present myself as the first soul he had saved, the first heart that had melted beneath his words. I drew myself up proudly on the steps, and thought of the night, a few years ago, when I had rushed down them, shouting and ashamed.

My knock was answered by a servant, who told me the house was now occupied by another family, that my friend had been forced to leave it because of financial losses soon after his mother died.

This was all I was to know, then; yet somehow I thought he was following his pure calling, undismayed by poverty, because it brought him nearer to the creatures he pitied and loved, but I was anxious, thinking he might

have suffered. After much questioning and seeking I could find no trace of him.

Long afterward, he came to me mysteriously and unexpectedly. I had taken for my own his house, and tried to recall the appearance of the room where I had first seen him. I furnished it as well as I could remember it. Over the mantelpiece still hung the picture of his grandfather, and I would often sit watching it, and think of my redemption and of my present happiness.

One night, as I sat thus brooding, a slight noise attracted my attention. There was no light in the room, for I loved to sit by the fire, and it had almost expired. One little flame illuminated, now and again, the picture above my head, and I fancied the eyes looked down upon me with a new light. They seemed to sparkle when the noise disturbed me, and when the sound was repeated by the drawing up of one of the windows, I forgot the portrait, and stole to the curtains on tip-toe.

I stood with my heart beating loudly. It needed no guessing to tell me what had happened. Some one was breaking into the house, coming as I had done, to be caught as I had been caught. I saw the foot searching the ground, and then the other following. I heard the hands slide from their hold, and in a second had the falling body in my arms. Before the intruder could recover, I switched on the light, and stood amazed. I saw the fierce eyes glow like an angry animal's, and saw the hand raised to strike, but I stood without quailing. Here was surely the portrait come to life, the eyes with the slumbering devil now well awake in them, the thick, lustful lips, the coarse face of the portrait above the mantelpiece! I glanced from one to the other.

"Thought I was his ghost, eh?" the fellow laughed, seeing my glance; and something in his voice caused me to look for no further likeness to the picture, but to see a resemblance to some one else I had seen.



"My God!" I said, "this is not he, this is not he! Sit down," I said, forcing him into a chair. He leaned back willingly into the cushions, rubbing his muddy feet clean in the hearth-rug. "I have been seeking you for years, to show you all you have done for me, and now to find you like this! What has happened, what has life done to you, my friend?"

He laughed at my lament, and rose, stretching up his arms as if to throw off a burden.

"What does it mean?" he said. "It means that you have taught me to live, to be free. I am no longer tied. Do you remember all you said in this very room, where I came to-night, hoping to make a rich haul? All the way here I was laughing to myself, thinking of you and how you had shown me the way. But I would be more lucky than you, I thought, for I knew every inch of the house so well; yet I little thought you were the tenant. I owe you gratitude for saving me from the starved life I had been reared to live. Let me thank you now."

The words he had used long ago came to my lips and froze there. Of what use was it for me to speak? He was experienced, and had chosen his path. I sat with my head in my hands, in deep trouble.

"All you said was true," he went on. "I lived only like a goat in a hedge when you saw me first. Now, I am tied by no cares. I fear nothing. I love nothing. I am content."

"I lied! I lied!" I cried, eagerly. "I said all that only because of my own jealousy and envy of you!"

As I spoke, the door opened and my wife entered, and in her sudden, sweet way, came to me, not noting any one in the room.

"I can't wait," she said; "you stay so long by the fire, and it is late. You are weary; come."

And then she saw my friend. He rose when her eyes met his, and raised his hat with a low bow.

"Madame," he said, "I detain your husband. In truth, I came but to thank him for a service he did me years ago, when he set me free from bondage."

"That is strange," she answered; "he is always seeking one who did him such a service, long ago, but we have never found him."

He laughed, and I held her hand tightly in mine as he strode to the door. We went together and let him out into the dark.

"It is a cold night for you to travel," said my wife, with a shudder, as the wind blew in with a moan. "Sir, you go out into the storm?"

"Into the storm," I said, sadly. "Can you not stay?"

"Good night, landsman!" he cried; and, shouting, flung his cap into the air. I saw him catch it, but the wind blew it away. His laugh was echoed by a woman's voice, and a wild shape darted forward and thrust a hand in his, and they disappeared, linked and laughing, into the night.



## A CLEAR CASE

MADGE—Why does she at last own up that they are in love?

MARJORIE—She had to. They sat on the sand yesterday, and never noticed the tide coming in until they were drenched.



ANY proposal of marriage has a double meaning.

## LIFE

ON a bleak, bald hill with a dull world under,  
The dreary world of the commonplace,  
I have stood when the whole earth seemed a blunder  
Of dotard Time in an aimless race.  
With worry about me, and want before me—  
Yet, deep in my soul was a rapture-spring  
That made me cry to the gray sky o'er me,  
"Oh, I know this life is a goodly thing!"

I have given sweet years to a thankless duty,  
While cold and starving, though clothed and fed  
(For a young heart's hunger for joy and beauty  
Is harder to bear than the need of bread).  
I have watched the wane of a sodden season,  
Which let hope wither, and made care thrive;  
And through it all, without earthly reason,  
I have thrilled with the glory of being alive.

And now I stand by great seas of splendor,  
Where love and beauty feed heart and eye;  
The brilliant light of the sun grows tender,  
As it slants to the shore of the by-and-bye.  
I count each hour as a golden treasure,  
A bead Time drops from a broken string—  
And all my ways are the ways of pleasure,  
And I *know* this life is a goodly thing.

And I know, too, that not in the seeing,  
Or having, or doing, the things we would,  
Lies that deep rapture that comes from being  
At one with the Purpose, which makes all good.  
And not from pleasure the heart may borrow  
That vast contentment for which we strive,  
Unless through trouble, and want, and sorrow,  
It has thrilled with the glory of being alive.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.



## NO SQUEEZING

DOLLY—There wasn't a single young man at the place I went to.

MADGE—That was just awful! I don't see how you squeezed through the Summer.

DOLLY—I didn't.

## IN THE NIGHT

GLEAM of the moon through drifting clouds,  
 Over the mountains gray;  
 Surge of wind in the swaying pines,  
 Murmuring far away;  
 Wash of waves on a shadowed shore,  
 Falling and rising o'er and o'er,  
 Singing their secret the long night through—  
 Could I but sing it to you!

Night has voices of wave and wind,  
 But never a voice to tell  
 The dream of peace in the drifting cloud  
 And the wave's long ebb and swell.  
 Heaven is near to earth to-night,  
 Bending close in the dim, sweet light,  
 Shadow and stars and falling dew—  
 Could I be near to you!

Gleam of the moon through drifting clouds,  
 Over the mountains far;  
 Peace in heaven and earth to-night,  
 Shadow and wave and star.  
 After the day's long toil and pain,  
 Infinite rest of night again;  
 Peace of the moon and mist and dew—  
 Could I but bring it to you!

MABEL EARLE.



## HOPE

HE—It's a great satisfaction to me to know that I am giving you a ring that  
 I can afford.

SHE—Well, dear, will you give me some day a ring that you can't afford?



## BETTER YET

“HOW jovial Mr. Pickster is!”  
 “Very. Is he happily married?”  
 “No—happily divorced.”

# AN EDUCATIONAL GLIMPSE

BEING SOME LETTERS TO A PUPIL FROM THE HERE-AND-NOW CORRESPONDENCE  
UNIVERSITY OF NOVEL-WRITING

By Hayden Carruth

DEAR MR. JUMPIN:

We are very glad that you have decided to take our course, and fit yourself for novel-writing. It is, without doubt, the best-paying business in which a man of push can now embark. You need small capital—in fact, none at all, if you have credit with some good photographer.

Your plan of taking both our B'gosh and Historic courses is good; in this way, you will be able to supply whichever there is the more demand for six months from now. You will need one gross special nickel-steel pens, fifty pads of paper, six quarts of green ink for B'gosh work, six quarts red ink for Historic work—and one type-writer. We recommend the Hammertouch machine as best for all kinds of imaginative writing. No, it will not be necessary for you to get a grammar. We enclose first lesson.

Yours truly,

A. PENN SMITH.

II

DEAR MR. JUMPIN:

Your first lesson-sheets have been carefully examined. We feel certain that you are destined to succeed as a novelist. We like your B'gosh paper, especially. Your Historic paper, however, needs more dash. You should give your characters more money, more titles, more weapons, and make them talk louder. Don't be afraid to kill a character—it is easy to intro-

duce others. See our series, "The Best of Beadle," in one hundred and ten volumes, for illustration of what we mean.

Your photograph is very bad. It may be a good likeness, but it will not reproduce well in half-tone. Try again. See if you cannot hit on an attitude. Lean your head on your hand—or somehow. Keep the photograph, however, and get additional copies of all taken at any time in the past.

We enclose third lesson. You will observe that it includes the preparation of six different biographical sketches of yourself. You will keep copies of them on file for future use.

Yours truly,

A. PENN SMITH.

III

DEAR MR. JUMPIN:

Your third lesson shows improvement. Of course, as you say, in your historical sheet you have followed Thackeray rather closely, but do not worry—there is enough of yourself in it to save it. So with your other chapters; some readers may be reminded of Dickens, but your own individuality redeems it.

Your new photographs are better. They indicate that you kept in mind your chosen profession while posing. This is the real secret; never forget that you are an Author.

Your various plans for getting your name into the papers after you begin

publishing show merit and originality. We like especially your idea of arranging in advance with your uncle for going your bail if you are arrested for annoying newspaper men on the street.

Your biographical sketches are good, so far as they go, but they don't go far enough. They might do for "Wow-Wow in America," or some similar work of reference, but sketches for the press should go more into detail. The color of ink you prefer, and whether you use Broomstraw-chaffette or Steralized Bran as a breakfast-food, are very important. Don't forget some interesting items about your wife, and hunt up the letters she wrote you before marriage, and have them ready in case your future publishers wish to send out extracts from them to the press.

Yes, Shove & Howell is a good firm for a young author, though we usually recommend our pupils to the McLeod-Noyes Publishing Company.

We enclose fourth lesson.

Yours truly,

A. PENN SMITH.

#### IV

DEAR MR. JUMPIN:

You continue to show improvement. In your B'gosh paper, however, you are much too sparing of apostrophes. You should leave out about thirty per cent. more letters, supplying their places with apostrophes.

In your romantic paper, we see that you are weak on prehistoric oaths. With this we send our set of patent rubber stamps—"sdeath," "ecod," "gadzooks," etc.—which you will find very convenient and labor-saving in preparing historic MSS.

Please make another search for your grandmother's daguerreotype. You must have it by the time your first book is out. *The Daily Hue-and-Cry*, *The Dry-Goods News*, *The Book-pusher*, and other literary papers will want it, without fail.

This batch of your own photographs is very good, especially the

snap-shots in the imaginary home interview, showing you looking for your collar-button. When you have completed your course, if you follow out your present plan to write a religious novel, you will need snaps of yourself at family prayers. A good one might be made of you asking a blessing at breakfast, showing dishes of Pulverized Fence Post on the table. Your publisher might be able to arrange with the manufacturers of this to stand half the expense of getting it into the papers.

Enclosed find fifth lesson.

Yours truly,

A. PENN SMITH.

#### V

DEAR MR. JUMPIN:

You are doing well, and we mark you 94 plus on this lesson.

Do not be discouraged because every MS. you send to the magazines or other periodicals comes back. The periodicals require an absurdly high standard of excellence. Very many of the most successful book writers have never had a MS. accepted by a periodical, and the more shrewd of our book authors no longer offer anything to an editor.

Your notion of reading English novelists for plots is decidedly bad. They are too well known. If you must have a plot—we do not advise it—get it from the French.

Your lack of three names must be remedied at once. The fact that your maternal grandmother was named Hornblower gives the hint—Piker Hornblower Jumpin will make a satisfactory showing on a title-page.

Your handling of the student of the school of journalism, who called for a practice interview, was amateurish. When he asked for your photograph you readily gave it to him. Our best authors blush modestly, and decline such a request, and then slip a package of a half-dozen into the coat-tail pocket of the journalist as they show him out the door. This fellow might



not have understood, but experienced professional newspaper men now pause and look at the weather as they leave an author's door to give him, or her, a chance.

In our opinion, you are going to make your mark in historic fiction rather than in the B'gosh school. You have not made a close enough study of antediluvian humor to succeed with the latter. You still need study for historic work, also, but we believe you can master it. Get our

"Selections from Old Sleuth," eighty-four volumes. Keep all your lesson work-papers—if not suitable for a book, perhaps you can syndicate them through the National Thought Supply and Newspaper Feeding Company.

Shall we send your diploma on the ordinary sheepskin or nicely engraved on polished sheet brass? Most of our more promising graduates take the brass. It costs two dollars extra.

Yours truly,

A. PENN SMITH.



## EXORCISM

L ONELY I am to-day, and full of doubt,  
Questioning fate, and dallying with fear  
That vaguely whispers warning in my ear  
Of unknown dangers, past my finding out,  
Until I wonder what 'tis all about—  
My life on this unsatisfying sphere,  
The solitary quest from year to year,  
My soul within and all the world without.

And then I hear your footstep on the stair,  
And feel the clinging question of your kiss.  
O gentle Love! My spectres, in despair  
At your approach, have fled to the abyss.  
How strange it seems that I should ever care  
For any cause or purpose beyond this!

ELSA BARKER.



## MISTAKEN IDENTITY

THE LADY—What right have you to enter my room in the middle of the night?

BURGLAR—Now, don't scold me, ma'am; I'm not your husband.



TO be impossible, woman has only to be too possible.

## IN THE HOUSE OF MORN

THERE'S cheer in the House of Morn,  
     For the robin bugler blows  
 A clear fanfare and debonair  
     From out of the orchard-close,  
 And the little wren echoes it back again  
     Till the very welkin glows.

There's cheer in the House of Morn;  
     Hark to the foxglove-bells,  
 How they ring with a crimson fluttering  
     In the depth of their dewy cells!  
 "Here's to your eyes!" the lily cries  
     To the nodding pimpernels.

There's cheer in the House of Morn  
     (Oh, the ecstasy thereof!),  
 For there's one abroad with the peace of God,  
     For the earth and the blue above,  
 And the sun and rills and the heights of the hills  
     Are fain of the face of Love.

SENNETT STEPHENS.



## A FABLE

A MAN loved a Girl with Fluffy Hair. But she worshiped a Wooden Indian which she had enshrined in a niche, and to which she offered incense.

"The mystery of his reserve fascinates me," she said. "There is such strength in these quiet natures!" Then the Man took an Axe, and smashed the Wooden Indian into small-sized sections of Kindling Wood. But the Girl gathered up the pieces whereto she continued to offer worship. And the Man died without ever learning that there were other Girls with Fluffy Hair.

ASSORTED MORALS—This fable teaches us that a man in love with a woman would be the most absurd spectacle in the world, if women never fell in love with men.

This fable shows us that the long, lean smile of the Wooden Indian is not misplaced.

This fable endeavors delicately to suggest a world-old problem, to wit: which is the greatest fool, a Wooden Indian, a Woman, or a Man?

SIDNEY BRETT.



THE last thing a man can forget is the woman whom it were better not to remember.

# VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ IN ENGLISH

By Brander Matthews

THE fact that a language may lack a satisfactory word to describe a certain thing is not always a proof that the people using the tongue are in reality deprived of that for which they may have no name of their own. In English, for example, there is no exact equivalent for the French *ennui*; but who would be so bold as to question the British possession of this state of mind, although it may be nameless in their speech? In French, again, there is no single word connoting all the shades of meaning contained in *home*; and yet no race is more home-keeping than the French, and no other nation has more sharply recognized in its laws the solidarity of the family. And although the most usual term for familiar verse is *vers de société*, there is little doubt that English literature, taking into account both its branches, British and American, is at least as rich in this minor department of poetry as French literature may be. Indeed, the more carefully the social verse of the English language is compared with that of the French language, the more probable appears to be the superiority of the *vers de société* in our own tongue—a superiority not only in abundance but also in variety.

The French have never been moved to bring together in a single volume the most striking of their lighter lyrics; and the absence of an adequate anthology makes it hard for a foreigner to assure himself that he is really acquainted with the best the French have to offer. But in English, as it happens, there is an anthology which is wholly satisfactory; and the finest ex-

amples of familiar verse, from the beginnings of our literature down to the middle of the nineteenth century, have been collected in the "Lyra Elegantiarium" of the late Frederick Locker-Lampson. With this volume in his hand, it is easy even for the careless reader to perceive that the store of social verse in England is both ample and many-sided, despite the fact that we are in the habit of borrowing a French name to describe it.

By excluding the work of all writers living when his volume was first issued, now nearly twoscore years ago, Locker-Lampson deprived his readers of any selections from his own "London Lyrics," from Calverley's "Fly-Leaves," from Mr. Lang's "Ballads in Blue China," and from Mr. Austin Dobson's "Vignettes in Rhyme." He was also forced to leave out nearly all that was best in the books of our early American writers, for American literature scarcely begins before the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and its chiefs were fortunately surviving when the British anthologist was at work on his collection. But even without making allowance for these self-imposed restrictions, the social verse collected by Locker-Lampson is remarkably fine; its average is surprisingly high, and its range is astonishingly wide. And it shows that English literature, from Skelton and Sidney at the beginning to Hood and Thackeray in the middle of the nineteenth century, was illumined not only by great poets of lofty imagination and of sweeping power, but also by a host of minor bards who were able to "express more or less well the lighter de-

sires of human nature," as Bagehot phrases it, "those that have least of unspeakable depth, partake most of what is perishable and earthly, and least of the immortal soul." These minor bards were masters in their own way, and they were able to give their little masterpieces the brevity, the brilliancy and the buoyancy which we expect in the best familiar verse.

Nor are the minor bards the sole contributors to "Lyra Elegantiarum." Not a few of the most characteristic pieces in Locker-Lampson's collection are from the works of the greater poets, the mighty songsters who are the glory of our literature. There is one poem of Shakespeare's, "O Mistress Mine, Where Are You Roaming?" and there are three of Ben Jonson's, including the lovely lyric, "To Celia."

"Drink to me only with thine eyes,  
And I will pledge with mine;  
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,  
And I'll not look for wine."

There are three selections from Dryden, and there might easily have been more. There is one from Gray—the delightful lines, "On the Death of a Favorite Cat." There are five by Byron and six by Coleridge; there is one by Wordsworth and another by Scott; and there are thirty-eight by Landor, "whose lightest and slightest claim to immortality," so Mr. Swinburne has asserted, with his wonted and wanton exaggeration, "is his indistinguishable supremacy over all possible competitors as a writer of social or occasional verse, more bright, more graceful, more true in tone, more tender in expression, more deep in suggestion, more delicate in touch, than any possible Greek or Latin or French or English rivals." The eulogy may seem somewhat overstrained, but there is no denying the difficulty of matching one lyric of Landor's, which has the classic grace, and the perfect purity of line of an Attic intaglio, and which might well be upheld as the highest achievement possible in familiar verse:

"Mother, I cannot mind my wheel:  
My fingers ache, my lips are dry:  
Oh! if you felt the pain I feel!  
But oh, who ever felt as I!

"No longer could I doubt him true:  
All other men may use deceit;  
He always said my eyes were blue,  
And often swore my lips were sweet."

Not only have the greater poets now and again condescended to the familiar verse in which success is almost as rare as it is in the loftier lyric, but the masters of prose have often been willing to adventure themselves as songsters of society. Among the dramatists, Congreve and Sheridan, of course, and Etherege and Vanbrugh as well, proved that upon occasion they could rhyme with the requisite facility and felicity. Of the novelists, both Smollett and Fielding more than once attempted to turn a couplet with playful intent. The politicians especially have been prone to seize on social verse as a precious relaxation from their sterner labors; and by no means the least interesting or the least admirable of the examples in Locker-Lampson's collection are the work of Chesterfield and the Walpoles—both Robert and Horace—of Canning and of Fox. The first Lord Houghton it was who suggested that "the faculty of writing verse (quite apart from poetic genius) is the most delightful of literary accomplishments, and it almost always carries with it the more generally useful gift of writing good prose." And it may be that the gift of writing good prose carries with it the likelihood that its possessor may achieve distinction in the special department of poetry where vernacular terseness is ever a most valuable qualification.

But what the prose writers and the greater poets have chanced to achieve in this variety of lyric, charming as it may be and unexpectedly exquisite, is, after all, a smaller contribution to our store of social verse than that which we have received from the half-dozen or the half-score lyricists who have won the most of their fame by their essays in familiar verse. In any history of *vers de société* in the British Islands, the salient names must be those of the lesser poets closely identified with this type of verse; and, in any discussion of English *vers de société*, attention must

be concentrated on Herrick and Prior, on Cowper and Goldsmith, on Praed and Hood, on Moore and Thackeray, and on Locker-Lampson and Austin Dobson.

It was in one of his juvenile essays that Lowell called Herrick "the best and most unconscious of the song-writers of his tuneful time." The best he is, no doubt; but is he really unconscious? Is it not rather that by a perfected art he could achieve spontaneity and the appearance of unconsciousness? Never do his unaffected lyrics reveal the long labor of the file; but who can guess what hidden toil underlay the lightest of his lovely trifles? Though they may never smell of the lamp, but seem rather to have flowered on a Spring morning and of their own volition, it would be rash indeed to deem Herrick only an improviser. There is the odor of an old-time garden in his fragrant rhymes—an echo of mating birds in the liquid melody of his varied measures. Waller's lines, "On a Girdle," Suckling's "Ballad on a Wedding," Lovelace's lyric on "Going to the Wars," none of these excels Herrick's "Gather Ye Rosebuds While Ye May" in imponderable grace or in incomparable ease. And nowhere is there a metrical perfection more certain, a play of fancy more captivating than in the "Bride-Cake" and in "Delight in Disorder" and in the abbreviated debate "Upon Julia's Clothes."

In Prior there is more of coarseness than there is in Herrick, although even Herrick has his full share of this defect of his century. In Prior, again, there is a cynicism of tone, especially in regard to woman, of which there is no trace in Herrick's brightsome balladry. But not a few of the foremost of Prior's pieces are as unstained as they are unaffected. Cowper—and no English poet ever had a better right to be heard on this subject—asserted that "every man conversant with verse-writing knows, and knows by painful experience, that the familiar style is of all styles the most difficult to succeed in. To make verse speak the language of prose, without being

prosaic, to marshal the words of it in such an order as they might naturally take in falling from the lips of an extemporary speaker, yet without meanness, harmoniously, elegantly, and without seeming to displace a syllable for the sake of the rhyme, is one of the most arduous tasks a poet can undertake. He that could accomplish this task was Prior; many have imitated his excellence in this particular, but the best copies have fallen far short of the original." A past-master Prior is of graceful gaiety, of debonair railery, of jaunty audacity; and yet by some he may be found a little lacking in true feeling sometimes, in tenderness, if not in sincerity. But there is no denying his exhibition of all these qualities in what must be considered as his most perfect poem, "To a child of quality five years old."

Cowper and Goldsmith loom larger among the lesser British bards than some who have been admitted to the sacred heights solely because of their familiar verse; yet it is not by their most important works or by their most pretentious that either Cowper or Goldsmith is now best known or best beloved. The careless ballad of "John Gilpin" is likely to outlive the solid translation of the "Iliad;" and "Retaliation" will probably outlast "The Deserted Village." Humor and good humor are found together in the familiar verse of both Cowper and Goldsmith, unlike as were the men themselves. Playful and cheerful are the "Jackdaw" that Cowper took over from the Latin, and the "Elegy on Mrs. Mary Blaise," which Goldsmith lightly borrowed from the French; and this playful cheerfulness is not so common that the verse it characterizes is likely soon to slip into oblivion. Nowadays, when more than a century stretches between us and the old-fashioned didacticism of Cowper and Goldsmith, "The Task" may be left unattempted except by professed students of poetry; and "The Traveller" may rest from his wanderings, reposing at last upon a dusty shelf. But there is still pleasure to be had in the



perusal of the lines, "On the Death of Mrs. Throckmorton's Bullfinch;" and "The Haunch of Venison" still provides a feast for all who relish mischievous fun.

To-day, the most ambitious poems of Moore seem sadly faded and outworn; even in his songs, where "all is beautiful, soft, half-sincere," as Bagehot remarked, "there is a little falsetto in the tone; everything reminds you of the drawing-room and the pianoforte." And, setting aside some of the simplest and most singable of his "Irish Melodies," the best of Moore that now survives is a little group of society verse, dealing pertly and piquantly with the tinkle of the pianoforte and with the chatter of the drawing-room. There is more than a Dresden-china prettiness in "Lesbia hath a charming eye," and in "Farewell!—but whenever you welcome the hour." There is more than mere sparkle; there is feeling, superficial, perhaps, but sincere, so far as it goes, in his verses "To Bessy."

Hood's possession of pure pathos and of rollicking humor cannot be denied, but more often than not he preferred to display them separately. Although his verse can be on occasion crisp and brisk, as in "I'm not a single man" and "Please to ring the belle," he did not often try to attain the rare balance of fun and sentiment which is expected in familiar verse and which Thackeray achieved so frequently. There is a frolicsome tenderness and a gentle sparkle about "The Mahogany Tree" and about the "Ballad of Bouillabaisse," which is characteristically Thackerayan. The rhythm is free and flowing, the rhymes are ingenious and frequent, the humor is external while the pathos is internal. The smile wreathes the corners of the lip while the tear is held back beneath the eyelid. Bolder than these is "Peg of Limavaddy," and deeper yet are the lines on the "Album and the Pen."

Thackeray derives from Cowper and from Goldsmith; while it is rather from Prior that Praed descends. Thackeray's verses are suave and suggestive;

Praed's are sometimes a little hard; they have a luster that is almost metallic, and their vivacity is now and then almost too vigorous. But how certain the stroke is! How sharp the wit! How happy the rhyme! His portraits of persons are etchings rather than miniatures, and every feature is keenly limned. Even if his manner is at times a trifle mechanical, his antithesis unduly insisted upon and his epigram over-emphatic, his wit is ever unflagging, his style is ever pellucid and his rhythm is unfailingly dexterous and flexible. His radiance is rather that of the diamond than of the running brook; but the stone is always clear-cut and highly polished and appropriately set. Mr. Austin Dobson has singled out "My Own Araminta" as a characteristic example of Praed's more sparkling lyrics and "The Vicar" as a satisfactory representative of his "more pensive character-pieces."

Mr. Austin Dobson is one of the two British bards whose supremacy in familiar verse was undisputed and indisputable in the final decade of the nineteenth century; and the other was the late Frederick Locker-Lampson. While Mr. Dobson derived his descent rather from Herrick, and, it may be, from Landor, Locker-Lampson had found his immediate model in Praed; and thus it happens that the "London Lyrics" of the latter fall more completely within the narrower limits of *vers de société* than do the "Vignettes in Rhyme" of the former. Locker-Lampson's "Piccadilly" and his "St. James Street" are truly songs of society, with all the elegance and all the courtesy the fashionable world believes itself entitled to expect.

Mr. Austin Dobson's "Molly Trefusis" and his "Ladies of St. James's" are a little larger in their appeal, as though the poet had a broader outlook on life, and refused to allow himself to be confined wholly within the contracting circle of Society.

Locker-Lampson can be as witty as Praed, though his wit is less obtrusive, and his cleverness is less often

paraded. He is far more tender and his touch is more caressing; and yet it is with Praed and with Prior that he is to be classed and compared. Mr. Austin Dobson is more of a poet; he has a lyric note of his own, purer and deeper than any we can catch in their verses; and so it is that he is less at ease than they are within the limitations of social verse, and that his finest poems are some of them not fairly to be considered as familiar verse. Indeed, it is not with Praed and Prior that Mr. Dobson is to be measured, but rather with their teachers in versification; and not without warrant did Mr. Aldrich once declare that Mr. Dobson "has the grace of Suckling and the finish of Herrick, and is easily master of both in metrical art." In his "Jocosa Lyra" the author of "Proverbs in Porcelain" has aptly and gracefully characterized the chief of his predecessors in the lighter lyric.

In our hearts is the GREAT ONE of AVON  
Engraven,  
And we climb the cold sunmits once  
built on

By MILTON.

But at times not the air that is rarest  
Is fairest,  
And we long in the valley to follow  
Apollo.

Then we drop from the heights atmos-  
pheric

To HERRICK,

Or we pour the Greek honey, grown  
blander,

Of LANDOR;

Or our cosiest nook in the shade is

Where PRAED is,

Or we toss the light bells of the mocker  
With LOCKER.

Oh, the song where not one of the Graces

Tight-laces—

Where we woo the sweet muses not starchly  
But archly—

Where the verse, like the piper a-Maying,  
Comes playing—

And the rhyme is as gay as a dancer  
In answer—

It will last till men weary of pleasure

In measure!

It will last till men weary of laughter . . .  
And after!

It is only toward the end of the eighteenth century that a division begins to be observable in the broad-

ening stream of English literature and that it thereafter runs in two channels, British and American. Of course, whatsoever is written in the English language belongs to English literature, if only it attains to the requisite individuality and the needful elevation; and yet, almost as soon as there came into existence such a thing as American literature, not long after the people of the United States had severed their political connection with Great Britain, the writings of American authors revealed certain minor characteristics unlike those of the British authors who were their contemporaries. It is not easy to declare precisely what it is that differentiates the American literature of the nineteenth century from the British literature of the same hundred years; nevertheless, there are few critics who have failed to perceive the existence of this difference, even if the most of them have been unable to analyze it. As we here in the United States do not live under social conditions exactly like those acceptable to our kin across the sea, the more closely our literature is related to our own life, the more it must differ from that produced in the British Isles, despite the use of the same language and despite the inheritance of the same traditions.

This difference between American literature and British literature, unmistakable as it may be to most of us, is never very pronounced; and is probably far less obvious in familiar verse than it is in poetry of a loftier aspiration. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the songsters of society must needs be bound by the customs and the conventions of well-bred circles, which will differ only a little, no matter what the divergence of the latitude. The manners of Murray Hill cannot vary very much from those of Mayfair; and, indeed, the chief distinction between the familiar verse of the two countries is that the American poets have been less interested in Murray Hill than the British poets have been in Mayfair. In other

words, American *vers de société* is less often a song of Society itself than is its British rival; it has a little less of the mere glitter of wit, and perhaps a little more of the mellower tenderness of humor. It shrinks less from a homely theme; and it does not so often seek that flashing sharpness of outline which Praed delighted in, and which sometimes suggests fireworks at midnight.

As might be supposed, the sparse specimens of familiar verse produced on this side of the Atlantic, while the future United States were still colonies of Great Britain, have the usual characteristics of all colonial literatures, and reveal a close imitation of models imported from the mother country. Even the satire of the Revolutionary period, pointed as it is and piquant, and far more frequent than is generally known, has scant originality of form. The "Battle of the Kegs" had British exemplars; and "McFingal" owed much to the example of Butler and of Churchill. Except that a poignant note of personal experience is heard in it now and again, the vigorous verse of Freneau varies but little from that produced by his British contemporaries. And yet a handful of familiar verse may be gleaned, even in this rather barren field; and more than one of Freneau's playful poems, the "Parting Glass," for instance, and the cheerful lines "To a Caty-did" may keep company with a few other clever lyrics of this lighter sort to be chosen carefully from out the more solid metrical efforts of Thomas Godfrey, Royall Tyler and John Quincy Adams.

Joel Barlow was the chief of the brave bards who wished to discount the future, and who sought most ambitiously to celebrate the coming glories of this country; and it is a curious instance of the irony of time that while Barlow's "Columbiad" is as unreadable to-day—or at least as little read—as Timothy Dwight's "Conquest of Canaan," his unpretending rhymes in honor of the "Hasty Pudding" are as fresh now,

as lively, as amusing, as they were on the day they were penned. This sole surviving specimen of Barlow's poetic aspiration may incline a little too much toward the mock-heroic to fall completely within the definition of familiar verse; and it is a little lacking in the pathos which Thackeray infused into the "Ballad of Bouillabaisse." But the sincerity of Barlow's lines is as undeniable as their cleverness, their shrewdness and their common-sense:

"There are who strive to stamp with disrepute  
The luscious food, because it feeds the brute;  
In tropes of high-strain'd wit, while gaudy prigs  
Compare thy nursing man to pamper'd pigs;  
With sovereign scorn I treat the vulgar jest,  
Nor fear to share thy bounties with the beast.  
What though the generous cow gives me to quaff  
The milk nutritious; am I then a calf?  
Or can the genius of the noisy swine,  
Though nursed on pudding, thence lay claim to mine?  
Sure the sweet song I fashion to thy praise,  
Runs more melodious than the notes they raise."

The reputation of the "Croaker Papers" of Halleck and Drake is much dimmed nowadays, and the reader in search of true *vers de société* is sadly disappointed since he finds in them only *vers d'occasion*, the interest of which has departed with the changing years. They are "songs of dead seasons," to use Mr. Swinburne's phrase, and the most of these jocular lyrics of the collaborating bards, which seemed so witty, so pert, so pointed when New York was only a tiny town on the toe of Manhattan, are seen to-day to be so thickly studded with contemporary allusions that they are readable only with the aid of plentiful annotation—and what is the zest of a joke that needs a footnote to be visible? In fact, nothing of Halleck's or Drake's, whether written by either singly or by both in collaboration, has revealed as vigorous a vitality as

the charming and fanciful "Visit from St. Nicholas" of another New Yorker, their contemporary, Clement C. Moore.

The most of the American poets of a larger reputation have condescended to the lighter lyric upon occasion, and have written poems which fulfil the triple qualification of brevity, brilliancy and buoyancy. Even the austere Bryant unbent his brows for once to tell in rhyme the tricky habits of the bobolink; while Emerson chose rather to address himself with witty wisdom and glancing fantasy "To the Humble Bee." The grave and sedate Longfellow was willing for once to appear rollicking, in his swinging stanzas in praise of "Catawba-Wine;" and the simple Whittier once again went back to the years of his youth, and in "School-Days" gave us a picture as clear as any of Prior's or Praed's and with a tenderness even more delicately suggested. This poem of Whittier's is evidence of the accuracy of Lowell's assertion that "sentiment is intellectualized emotion—emotion precipitated, as it were, in pretty crystals by the fancy."

Lowell's own verse was too earnest and too strenuous for him often to be content with this sort of sentiment, which he called "the delightful staple of the poets of social life like Horace and Béranger. . . . It puts into words for us that decorous average of feeling to the expression of which society can consent without danger of being indiscreetly moved. . . . It is the sufficing lyrical interpreter of those lighter hours that should make part of every man's day. . . . True sentiment is emotion ripened by a slow ferment of the mind, and qualified to an agreeable temperance by that taste which is the conscience of polite society." Had he so chosen, Lowell might have been the master of all Americans who have attempted familiar verse. He seemed to have every qualification—the ready humor, the good-tempered wit, and the sincere sentiment that never curdled

into sentimentality. As it is, he has left us a half-dozen, or at the most, a half-score of lyrics which belong by the side of the best examples of our social verse. "Without and Within" is perhaps the most widely known, and "Auf Wiedersehen" has been almost as popular.

It is Lowell's friend and fellow-professor that most critics would select as the foremost American songster of society; and this was also the opinion of Locker-Lampson, who declared, in 1867, that Holmes was "perhaps the best living writer of this species of verse." Holmes's poems had most of them an eighteenth-century flavor; and they might well have borne an eighteenth-century title, "Poems on Several Occasions," since they had been so largely evoked by the current events in Boston, of which proud town he was the loyal bard. As he himself put it wittily,

"I'm a florist in verse, and what would people say,  
If I came to banquet without my bouquet?"

Unfortunately, these flowers of metrical rhetoric, which seem so fresh when first plucked, fade only too swiftly when the occasion has fallen out of memory; and it is not surprising that the most of Holmes's rhymes for events at once local and transient are now of lessening interest. But what is really astonishing is that so many of them have kept their vivacity as long as they have. Of Holmes's *vers de société*, as distinguished from his *vers d'occasion*, the best are as bright now as ever they were. "The Last Leaf," for example, has not withered. In "Dorothy Q.," again, and in more than one other sprightly and sparkling lyric, Holmes proves that society-verse may be, as Mr. Stedman has noted, "picturesque, even dramatic," and that it may "rise to a high degree of humor and of sage and tender thought." "Contentment" is another of Holmes's essays in familiar verse which is simply perfect in its ease and its certainty and its ironic humor. And "The Deacon's Masterpiece," which most of us prefer



to remember as "The One Hoss Shay," although, perhaps, a little too long and a little too comic to be called *vers de société*, is one of the minor masterpieces of American literature.

Of the American poets who died before the nineteenth century drew to an end, three demand consideration here—John Godfrey Saxe, Eugene Field and Henry Cuyler Bunner. Of these, Saxe was much the eldest, by far the most old-fashioned in his method, and also the least individual. He had borrowed the knack of punning from Hood, and he had taken over the trick of antithesis from Praed. If Mr. Swinburne was right in asserting that even in the narrowest form of *vers de société* we look "for more spirit and versatility of life, more warmth of touch, more fullness of tone, more vigor and variety of impulse than we find in Praed"—then it is hard for us to grant high rank to Saxe, who was but Praed once-removed. Sometimes Saxe skirts perilously close to vulgarity; sometimes his humor is no better than crackling witicism; sometimes he fails to achieve the elevation of tone which even familiar verse ought ever to attain; sometimes he lacks even the suggestion of that sentiment which ought to sustain *vers de société*. But sometimes his success is evident and undeniable, as in the "Mourner à la Mode," for example, and in "Early Rising," and more especially in "Little Jerry," a perfect portrait deftly touched with tenderness.

Eugene Field resembled Saxe at least in one respect; his broadly comic lyrics are more abundant than his social verse. His humor was so spontaneous that it often became almost acrobatic, reveling in the exuberance of its own fun. He delighted in the apt use of slang, and it is his indulgence in this fondness for vernacular freshness which must rule out "The Truth about Horace" from any careful anthology of social verse, in spite of its brilliancy and its buoyancy. Field had not only a deeper knowledge of literature than Saxe, he had also a wider outlook on life. He had more originality, a richer native gift of met-

rical expression, a keener ingenuity in handling both rhyme and rhythm, a more daring adroitness of epithet; above all, he had far more feeling, and his sentiment was sincerer and sturdier. Of a certainty, "Little Boy Blue" is the most popular of Field's poems—and it is also his finest effort in the limited field of familiar verse. "Thirty-nine" and "Old Times, Old Friends, Old Loves" have the same note of sentiment, more playful but not less pure. And even "Apple-Pie and Cheese," frolicsome as it is in its rhythm and in its gaiety, is still restrained enough and sufficiently decorous to come under the canon of *vers de société*. Indeed, it is curious to note how often good things to eat and to drink have inspired the songsters of society; and Field's "Apple-Pie and Cheese" is the nineteenth-century mate of Barlow's eighteenth-century "Hasty Pudding."

Bunner was more truly a poet than either Field or Saxe; he could strike a loftier note than they, at once more resonant and more appealing; his humor is more subtly united with his pathos; his lyre was more obviously a winged instrument than either of theirs. "The Way to Arcady" has a freedom, an easy lightness, a graceful gentleness, a simplicity of sentiment rarely seen in combination nowadays, although not infrequent in the slighter songs of the Elizabethan dramatists. It was, in fact, the song of one who had skirted the coast of Bohemia on his way to the forest of Arden, where he was to feel himself at home, listening to the shepherds as they piped and looking on as the shepherdesses danced in the Spring sunshine. Not only had Bunner profited by the example of Herrick and of Suckling, he had also felt the force of Heine's lyric irony, and he had come under the charm of Mr. Austin Dobson's captivating music. His originality was compounded of many simples, but when he possessed it at last, it was all his own. "Forfeits" and "Candor" are absolutely within the narrowest definition of society-verse; and they have an indisputable individuality of their own.



So has "The Chaperon," with its flavor of old-time tenderness. So has "One, Two, Three," with its exquisite certainty of touch and its artful escape from sentimentality. So has "To a Reader of the XXI. Century," with its easy variety and its witty playfulness.

Of the living, it is always less easy to speak with all due restraint than it is to criticize calmly those who have gone before, leaving us only their writings to influence the pending decision. Yet it would be absurd to omit here all mention of two of the American masters of familiar verse, Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman and Mr. Thomas Bailey Aldrich. Theirs is never society-verse in its narrower sense, for their lightest lyrics are always poetry, with no trace of the striving and with no taint of the cheap smartness which only too often contaminates mere society-verse. Rather is theirs familiar verse in its most refined perfection, such as Cowper would have relished.

Mr. Aldrich's "Nocturne" has a spontaneity and a delicate grace that Herrick would have appreciated; and Mr. Stedman's "Pan in Wall Street" has a commingling of wit with sentiment that recalls forerunners as dissimilar as Prior and Theocritus.

Other living American poets there are not a few who have adventured now and again in verse of this sort, seemingly so easy and actually so hard. Some of them are worthy followers of those whose contributions have been here considered; and all of them may be encouraged by the fact that, although success must needs be infrequent, its reward is as certain to-day as it was nearly a score of centuries ago, when Pliny was writing to Tuscus that "it is surprising how much the mind is entertained and enlivened by these little poetical compositions, as they turn upon subjects of gallantry, satire, tenderness, politeness, and everything, in short, that concerns life and the affairs of the world."



## TOO LATE

A KIND word delayed,  
And the heart cried;  
A fond word was stayed,  
And love died.

Gay youth with lips parted,  
Beware! beware!  
O maiden light-hearted,  
Take care, take care!

The truest-spied arrow  
Winged by Fate,  
Most cruel to harrow,  
Is named "Too Late."

SEUMAS MACMANUS.



LOSING your balance—overdrawing your bank account.

## THE KISS

"H E'S going to kiss me," wist the maid.  
 And, in her roguish heart, she smiled;  
 And, deeper in the ambuscade,  
 Straightway with eyes and lips beguiled.  
 A challenge was each dimple wee,  
 And becked each errant tress of hair,  
 While ran her mind, in wicked glee:  
 "The stupid thing! He doesn't dare!"

"I'm going to kiss her!" vowed the man  
 And chuckled, and was ill at ease,  
 And fidgeted, and now began  
 To feel a weakness of the knees.  
 It seemed, somehow, a downright shame  
 Deliberately to scheme like this,  
 And play so treacherous a game  
 Upon so innocent a miss!

The conversation fitful grows;  
 Demure is she as any nun—  
 With sudden grit, the scratch he toes—  
 A start—a smack—the deed is done!  
 ("High time, the ninny!" she inveighs.)  
 ("Well planned!" he sniggers, sheepishly.)  
 "How *dare* you!" she rebukes, ablaze.  
 "I did it ere I *thought*!" pleads he.

EDWIN L. SABIN.



## GOING THE PACE

J AGGLES—What is his wife doing at the sanatorium?

W AGGLES—Recuperating after her month's rest at a fashionable Summer resort.



## GOSSIP-PROOF

M RS. CRAWFORD—Have they much money?

M RS. CRABSHAW—Why, they're so rich that, if they preferred, they could afford to stay in town all Summer.

# AN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIR

THE STORY OF A YACHT RACE

By Frank Savile

“**I** WOULDN'T mind so much if it was you—no, not if it was *any* Britisher,” said George K. Lascom, looking the picture of misery; “but a German—a *German!* It's the very depths of degradation!”

It was impossible to avoid laughing. Lascom's face was too ludicrously and irresistibly unhappy. But, at the same time, both Brainton and Dyer nodded sympathetically.

“It *is* a bore,” agreed the Englishman.

Lascom banged the table till the spoons and glasses rang together.

“A bore!” he cried, “a bore! Is that all you can call it? I tell you, it's a national misfortune—it's the hardest blow that has struck this country since Washington chased your people out of Concord. Bull's Run was nothing to it!”

Brainton grinned.

“Thanks for the compliment,” he said. “Then you wouldn't be disturbed if I lifted the cup?”

“Not a bit!” declared the other. “If you did, we'd have it back next year as easy as hoeing peas. That's always the way with you in the old country—you wake up and make an effort once in a while. Then you smile in a self-satisfied way, applaud yourselves, and turn round for another snooze. But the Germans! I tell you, if this cup once gets to Hamburg it's a thousand to one it never sees America again! They'll keep it by fair means if they can, but if not—” He shrugged his shoulders, significantly.

Brainton smiled again, but kept his thoughts to himself. Oddly enough, Shutlanger, who that very day had won the second of the races for the International Cup, had used much the same sort of hints to him about American methods.

“I'd give ten million dollars to be sure that America would win the finals,” went on Lascom. “I'd give half as much to see *you* beat him,” he added.

Brainton nodded his thanks.

“Neither sum would take you far on the way to ruin,” he answered, and with truth, for Lascom was many times a millionaire. There were few men in the room, indeed, who could be described as anything else. They were dining at the Eclectic, where fresh-grown strawberries and peaches are a common Christmas dessert, and where Silas Floyd Panting, the railroad magnate, once entertained the members to a snowballing match on a Midsummer day.

It was the evening of the second round of the international races, and depression lay like a fog over New York City. The first race had been won by Brainton's *Bulldog*, but in a manner that disturbed no American heart. It had been a keen contest, and mere luck had given the victory to the Englishman. Lascom's *Eagle*, leading by half a mile within ten minutes of the winning-post, had lost her topsail gaff in a sudden squall. The New Yorkers shrugged their shoulders, and said that they didn't grudge one win under such circumstances to a

plucky opponent who was bound to be beaten in all four succeeding events. But the result of the second day had upset all calculations.

Herr Shutlanger's entry for the cup had been received with nothing more than a polite amusement that barely veiled contempt. The *Vaterland* was a good sea boat, built on modern lines, her only specialty being her aluminium hull. Experts scanned her, glanced at her lines, and explained that she was possibly good enough to make a respectable third in the coming struggle. Not a yachtsman between Maine and California would have demurred at betting a year's income that both American and English boats would beat her handsomely.

And the first day's racing bore out this verdict. It had been a stormy one, a gusty, eight-knot breeze, diversified by sudden squalls. *Vaterland* was three miles in the offing at the finish.

But the scene, forty-eight hours later, was a very different one. In light, variable airs, interspersed with windless calms, the German boat had glided from her adversaries fathom by fathom, till half-way to the outer mark boat she had a lead of five miles or more! The other two seemed to be standing still. Now and again, one would get a slight impetus from a landward gust, and sail merrily for a couple of minutes or so, only to drop back into the grip of the glassy swell, and labor as if she were ploughing a sea of glue. Canvas was set and reset. Nothing availed. The *Vaterland* was half-way round the triangular course before her rivals caught the stronger winds of the outer seas, and though, from that moment, they gained swiftly, they lost all their gains as they neared back to the winning-post, and left the German a winner by a quarter of an hour, not counting her time allowance! It came home with a convincing shock to the minds of the onlookers that if the three succeeding races were sailed on three such windless days, America was beaten—was absolutely and undeniably beaten.

So, amid the lavish surroundings of the Eclectic, no whit cheered by the bounteous repast of which he had partaken, George K. Lascom was bewailing himself to his friend, rival and guest, Sir Arthur Brainton, while Lieutenant James Dyer made a sympathetic listener.

"There'll have to be an accident," said the sailor, breaking silence at last. "There's no other way out of it. Manila Bay was insulting, Venezuela was exasperating, but this is just the one point where the tension breaks. I shall ram the *Vaterland* by accident on Thursday."

Lascom looked up with a sort of doubtful hopefulness.

"I didn't know you had a ship, Jim," he said.

"I haven't," said Dyer. "I'm testing the new submarine that the Spitzler Manufacturing Company are delivering to the Government. I tried her for submersibility yesterday. I shall have her speed trials the day after to-morrow."

"Ugh!" shuddered Brainton, looking at him, pityingly. "Doesn't it make you as nervous as a cat to go grubbing about in the mud and the dark in a tin kettle like that? Suppose anything went wrong?"

"There's nothing to go wrong," said Dyer. "Even if the electricity failed in the motor, or the air gave out, one twitch of a lever drops off the lead keel, and she skips up to the surface like a trout out of a pond."

"There, now!" cried Lascom, eagerly. "You can blunder up against this German ketch at her moorings as easily as chewing gum. Get lost under water, and rise beneath her!"

"By fair means if you can, if not—" quoted Brainton, and Dyer chuckled.

"There are two things against it," he answered. "The first is that I sha'n't be in command—it's a company's crew, and I go only to inspect and report. The other is that useful little instrument, the periscope, by means of which you can see what passes on the surface while you keep below yourself. That doesn't give me

a reasonable chance to make any mistakes."

Lascom sighed.

"There's nothing to be done but pray for heavy weather," he grumbled.

"There's Shutlanger, dining with Rosenberg, the Jew. I wonder how such fellows get elected to the Eclectic. He looks as pleased as Shutlanger himself. For all his naturalization, I don't mind betting he'd be delighted to see the cup lifted by Germany."

"Who is the third man?" said Brainton, looking around.

"Don't know," said Lascom, indifferently; but Dyer was able to find an answer.

"A business friend of the Jew's," he said. "He's Commander Kranzler, of the German Navy. Rosenberg's managing director of the Spitzler Company, and they are delivering a couple of armored cruisers for the German Government in a month's time. Kranzler's been sent over to watch the completion. I've met him in their yard half-a-dozen times lately."

"I'd like to pick a quarrel with all three," muttered Lascom, as the German trio rose and passed on into the smoking-room. There certainly was a sparkle of exasperating patronage in the nod with which Shutlanger greeted his two opponents.

The next morning, as Dyer strolled into the gate that opened into the Spitzler Company's building-wharf and docks, he was greeted by the managing director with a doleful countenance and hands uplifted in mournful deprecation.

"Mr. Dyer," snuffled the German Jew, "I'm just as sorry as I know how to be that I have to inform you that you can't have your speed trials to-morrow—in fact, possibly not for a week."

Dyer stared.

"What's wrong?" said the lieutenant, curtly. "She was as right as rain when I left her yesterday."

"That's true enough," agreed Rosenberg, "and now her motor wouldn't propel a cat-boat. The accumulators were burst by that half-witted fore-

man of mine, showing off experiments to Herr Kranzler this morning. I'd have given him his dismissal there and then, only the captain begged him off—said it was his fault for asking to see the machinery in motion."

"You'd no business to allow a foreigner on a Government boat," said Dyer, sternly. "Let me see those accumulators."

"I know I hadn't," said the other, trotting meekly alongside, "but it was done without my knowledge. And I've sent away the accumulators to the Maxfield Company for repairs."

Dyer frowned.

"I ought to have been consulted first," he said. "I shall certainly report on the matter to the Government. Who is that on board now?" he asked. They had reached the dry dock in which the long, sleek hull of the submarine reposed. Voices were echoing up through the open manholes in her deck.

The question was answered, but not by Rosenberg. Kranzler, followed by the foreman, emerged on the deck plates, looked up, and recognized the American. He gave a very slightly perceptible start before he nodded, cheerily.

"Goot morning, looftenant," he cried. "You are early about."

"Too late, it seems," said Dyer, in a rage, "or my accumulators would not have been wrecked."

The other made an apologetic gesture.

"Ach! dose accumulators!" he answered. "You must plame Herr Rosenberg, not me. He is so prout of them that he insist I shoulte see them work. I am derribly sorry."

Dyer turned to the Jew in time to catch the tail end of a frown which had been most evidently directed to the commander's address. They were evidently lying, these two. Why?

"That's not so," whispered Rosenberg, hurriedly, as Kranzler strolled up the ladder, and with another nod turned away to the other end of the dock where the riveters' hammers were clanging on one of the half-fin-



ished cruisers; "that's not so, Mr. Dyer. But I can't afford to contradict him. He's got a free hand with his Government, and they might go back on me."

Dyer halted, and stared at him, meditatively; then, without another word, descended the ladder, dropped through the manhole, and gazed around him. There was little enough to see. The accumulators had vanished—that was plain enough; but, in other respects, the machinery was as he had left it the day before. As he turned toward the ladder again, he stumbled. His foot had caught in a long, thick coil of twisted wire.

He swore as he kicked it aside, and Rosenberg renewed his apologies. Litter was more than he could stand, he averred. In spite of all Captain Kranzler's representations his foreman should be dismissed—his carelessness was enough, but untidiness put him outside the pale of mercy. He should go—he should see to it at once. And Mr. Dyer might be certain that the accumulators should be ready at the very earliest possible moment.

"Very well," said the other, curtly. "I'll call down to-morrow to hear how they are getting on."

Rosenberg made an abasing motion of his hands. To-morrow the works would be shut. He had given all his employees a holiday to see the race—they were German, so many of them, and they had almost demanded it; but the Maxfield Company would be going on with the accumulators all the same. He would send word of their progress to the lieutenant's address.

For the second time, Dyer came to a sudden halt, looked Rosenberg curiously in the face, and then passed on his way without speaking. He didn't offer his companion the compliment of a farewell, but made his way out of the yard in silence.

The next day, armed with his telescope, he stood upon the deck of his friend's yacht, awaiting with impatience the sound of the starting gun. *Eagle* had the middle station for the moment, as each yacht manoeuvred

across the wind on the landward side of the mark-boat, but both *Vaterland* and *Bulldog* gave no mean exhibition of seamanship. There was very little advantage to either one of the three in the start; but if there was any, *Bulldog* had it. She slipped over the line perhaps five seconds before the other two. The conditions were much what they had been two days before, but the English boat seemed answering to the light winds better. She slid forward a fair four knots an hour.

There was a sort of tension of silence on the excursion boats at first as the English yacht took the lead. Then, as *Eagle* set her spinnaker and slipped quickly past *Vaterland* at a pace that brought her almost alongside *Bulldog*, a roar burst from twenty thousand throats, and the skirling of a hundred sirens added to the din. Their own boat was "cantering" away, the excited trippers told one another, and vied to show their noisy appreciation of the fact.

Their satisfaction and their applause died as quickly as it was born.

*Eagle* seemed suddenly to halt and hang. There was still a tiny zephyr from off the land, but it failed, somehow, to grip her. Her canvas was partly filled, but her hull lagged through the early calm. She seemed to blunder with what a reporter aptly termed "a three-legged motion" that was most bewildering. "She might be towing a cargo boat," said Brainton to his Norfolk skipper, and the latter, a man of few words, simply grunted, "Over-canvased," as he eyed her with every sign of satisfaction. *Bulldog* was gaining fathoms every minute.

And then came the turn of the English boat. The wind was behind her, the ripple aft on the surface showed as much; yet she, too, with her canvas fairly filled, staggered with a curious, halting action that made the mountain of white sails shiver from peak to boom. She repeated, only with exaggeration, every motion that her American rival had indulged in five minutes before. She threshed through the

water as if her knife-like stem were the broad bows of a timber ship.

And she seemed to have transhipped *Eagle's* cargo of bad luck. For, as the English boat rocked and tumbled uneasily, the American yacht slipped forward with sails fully distended, and careered away down the wind. The dipping action of her bowsprit vanished. She skimmed across the surface with the graceful action of a bird, and was a full furlong ahead of her opponent before the applause which greeted this sudden recovery of advantage had died from the attendant fleet.

Her lead was but momentary. A minute later, a gust swept down upon the *Bulldog*, and sent her flying past her American rival, who strained and staggered as if becalmed. It was most curious to watch—this suddenly alternate movement of the two yachts, and one man on board the *Eagle*, after scanning not only the racers, the excursion fleet, but every foot of the surrounding sea with a telescope, took his short beard in both hands, and nearly tugged it out in his perplexity. This was Dyer, the most suspicious, but the most puzzled, man outside Sandy Hook.

Meanwhile, *Vaterland* was scudding seaward with a sober, steady, easy motion that increased as she met the grip of the ocean breezes. She took a wider offing than her rivals, and there was nothing in her motion that was intermittent or halting. She plodded toward the outer mark-boat at a complacent five-knot pace that sent her round it while the other two were six miles astern.

On the second leg of the triangle, however, she was outpaced. In spite of her huge start she rounded the next mark-boat a bare half-mile ahead, for the other two, every inch of sail set to the stronger breezes, came racing down upon her in glorious rivalry not a furlong apart. They passed her ten miles out from home.

Yet, half an hour later, America's victory was patently hopeless, and England's practically so. As they lost the force of the stronger winds and

came into the influence of the landward cat's-paws, the uneasy motion of the morning seized again upon each of the leaders in turn. They dipped, dragged, plunged, rolled in the trough of the shallow swell, and finally were passed for the second time by *Vaterland*, who slid complacently and steadily nearer and nearer to the winning-post, with *Eagle* a mile, and *Bulldog* half that distance, in the rear.

The excitement on the excursion boats was frantic. Howls of execration and encouragement went up. The Marconi instruments sent despairing messages to land; the newspaper offices received them with amazed incredulity, and flared them forth into woe-begone head-lines that stirred the city to its very depths. Three matches sailed, and America had not gained a single victory! Alas! Alas!! Alas!!!

And then, as a groan echoing from twenty thousand throats announced that *Vaterland* had actually rounded the winning-post while *Bulldog* chased her hopelessly home two furlongs behind, Dyer gave a sudden exclamation, snatched up his glass, and scanned the sea immediately to port. At the same time, *Eagle* began to move rapidly through the water. The breeze seemed to have gained sudden force. Dyer stared and stared. He lowered his glass, wiped it, and stared again; then, with a very fervent word, put it quietly down, and walked aft. He did not attempt any condolences with Lascum—the yachtsman was too far in the depths of despair to receive anything of the kind with resignation. But there was a very determined expression on the lieutenant's face as he was rowed ashore in the dingy, and he withdrew to his rooms without stopping to greet a single acquaintance. When he emerged from them again, the dusk had fallen. He was dressed in a pilot-cap and jacket, with a handkerchief knotted round his neck, and looked the dockside laborer to the life. The better to support the character, he made off in the direction of the river front. He slouched past the main entrance to the Spitzler Company's yard

to find, as he had expected, that the gates were locked.

He passed on. The side door into the next yard was open. He glanced in, noted that the timekeeper in the little lodge was absorbed in his registers, and slipped through into the shadow of a coal-stack. He passed gingerly along the trucks till he came to a point where a mass of iron pigs was arranged in an orderly mound. It touched and reached to within ten feet of the top of the wall that divided it from the Spitzler wharf.

He looked around him, unloaded a couple of bales from a truck, and toiled up the pigs with them. The two, heaped together, enabled him to scramble upon the wall-top.

It was a long drop to the ground. He looked about him, hesitatingly. Twenty feet away, the arm of a crane projected to within five feet of the masonry. He crept toward it, sprang outward, and gripped its tarpaulined cover. Swinging himself lightly to the ground, he stole silently to the dock side and found shelter in the shadow of a dismantled boiler. A quick glance assured him that the dock in which the submarine had lain was filled with nothing but water.

For an hour, he lay still. Then the sound of footsteps aroused him. A couple of men came quietly through the darkness, passed on to the dock gates that gave entrance from the river, and began to work the winches. They stood upon the gates, conversing in low tones for another twenty minutes, till the wash of ripples, the grating sound of steel meeting wood and stone announced that something had entered the basin. The gates swung back, but not a single light had been shown. The next moment, the sound of two familiar voices came to Dyer's ears. Rosenberg, breathing heavily, climbed the ladder and stood upon the wharf, followed by Kranzler. Dyer ground his teeth as he listened to the echo of the German captain's triumphant chuckle. The two passed on up the yard talking, followed, five minutes later, by the other men.

The lieutenant waited a minute or two longer till the complete silence assured him that he was left alone. Then he slid through the darkness, found the ladder, gained the deck of the submarine, and, lifting the man-hole cover, passed inside. He held his hands outstretched before his face, for the gloom was inky.

He thought he knew the interior of the boat with accurate familiarity, but his confidence received a severe shock. His palms came violently into contact with an object amidship, immediately above the accumulators which had been replaced. It was entirely strange to him.

He passed his hands about it, curiously. It was of steel, apparently, horseshoe-shaped, and wound round and round with coil upon coil of wire. He patted it, and fondled it with growing amazement, till his hands found and followed two supplementary wires that connected it with the accumulators. At that, Dyer let fly a vehement exclamation.

"Great Snakes!" he exclaimed. "The clever scoundrel!"

His astonishment overcame him. He sank back upon the bed-plates of the propeller, muttering, swearing, yet filled, if his half-coherent words were any guide to his frame of mind, with a certain admiration. He finished with a stern chuckle.

"And now, Messrs. Rosenberg and Kranzler, hypocrites, this is where *I* come in," he explained as he struggled to his feet.

He examined the new object by touch for another five minutes, murmuring to himself, and then climbed softly up and through the manhole. He reached the wharfside, found the crane, scaled it, skipped lightly to the dividing wall, and departed as he had come.

The next day, he shunned his acquaintances. A note to Lascom, explaining that a slight touch of influenza would prevent his accepting the invitation to be present on the *Eagle* for the fourth contest, adjured him to keep up his spirits, for the writer saw no

reason to despair. He wished him the best of luck.

But the evening, or, rather, the small hours of the morning, preceding the race, found the lieutenant back on the wharfside again, clad in a warm jersey and trousers, and equipped with several biscuits, half-a-dozen bars of chocolate, and a revolver. He crept on board the submarine with the same caution that he had used before.

Carefully closing the dead-lights across the two upper ports, he struck a light, and proceeded to examine the ballast tanks beneath the rough planks that floored the engine-room. They were full. He worked the pump till he had entirely emptied one.

He scanned the woodwork till he came upon a knot-hole. Then he arranged them so that they fell easily into place, the knot-hole corresponding to the manhole space of the empty ballast tank. And, into this latter, he crept gingerly, limb by limb, leaving the cover off, but pulling the planks into place accurately above him.

"If they happen to refill the tank—" said Dyer, grimly, as he disappeared, lying down on the dank steel and composing himself to wait stoically for the morning.

But it was before there was any vestige of daylight that the companions he had expected arrived. Rosenberg and Kranzler, followed by a man whom Dyer, through the knot-hole, recognized as the yard foreman, slid down into the interior of the submarine, gave one or two orders in a low voice to invisible assistants on the wharf side, and set the motor working.

Another instant, as the manhole closed, and Dyer realized that they were off, and he himself as yet undiscovered.

The crew of three indulged in little conversation. The engine throbbed and purred; the wash of the ripples was distinct, and by it Dyer knew that they were as yet unsubmerged. But the revolutions of the engine told him that they were maintaining a fair speed, while the motion revealed the fact that they were gaining the

open sea. Rosenberg steered, peering through the upper observation port.

After about two hours, a thin wisp of light explained that dawn was come. The steersman gave a curt order, and the sea closed over the deck, and the motion experienced on the surface ceased. The periscope was floated up. Rosenberg transferred his regard to its dial, and so another three hours went lingeringly by. In his damp hiding-place, his eye to the knot-hole, silently relieving his hunger by munching alternate chocolate and biscuit, Dyer endured the wait with all the philosophy at his command.

Finally, Rosenberg broke the silence.

"The mark-boat is moored. They are coming out," he announced; and Kranzler left his station at the engine to come and peer at the dial. His face did not express entire satisfaction.

"Much more wind to-day," he remarked, but Rosenberg did not seem put out.

"No matter, captain," he answered in German; "we shall hold them—we should hold them in half a gale, if we tried—with these new accumulators," and Kranzler nodded. In his kennel, Dyer squirmed with suppressed excitement.

For the next hour, the two above him exchanged desultory remarks, sharing the periscope impartially. It was Rosenberg who announced the start at last.

"There's the gun," he exclaimed, "and here they go. *Vaterland* has got well away. The English boat overran the line, and is tacking back. We must deal with *Eagle* first. Here she comes—now—now!"

The spokes of the wheel spun in his hand. His eyes were glued to the periscope. He shouted curt directions to the engineer.

"Full speed! So—so! Back her—back her! Now we have it—now! Ah! she has shifted—half speed—half! That is it—good! Now she comes over us—now!" His hand twitched upon the wheel. His breath came in excited pants—he seemed glued to the periscope. Suddenly, he gave a shout.



"So!" he cried. "Shift the power—shift it!" and from his tiny conning-tower Dyer saw the engineer grip a lever that was unknown to him. There was a tiny crackling sound. The coiled wire round the horseshoe steel seemed to vibrate, and, with a snap and a clang, a loose nut from the bed-plates flew up to it and clung, meeting it with a lightning flash of sparkling flame. The motor ceased working, but the onward motion continued, though with a heavy, intermittent drag, as if they were being towed.

Rosenberg gave a triumphant chuckle.

"We have her now, captain," he said. "We have her as fast as if we held her with a hawser. *Vaterland* gains! Ach, she gains splendidly! This strong breeze suits her. She is half a mile to the good. The English boat is getting dangerous now. We will release this poor, draggled *Eagle*, and give the *Bulldog* a turn. Lead him by his chain, ha, ha!" And he gave a crisp command to switch the power back to the motor again.

The loose nut that clung to the wires fell back to the floor as the current was turned into the motor, and they were off. Rosenberg began to shout directions as before. The manœuvres were shorter this time.

*Bulldog*, running a straight course before the wind, was more easily overtaken. They slid comfortably beneath her keel. Again, the current was diverted; again, the coiled wires snatched up the loose nut, to receive it with the same blue sparkle of fire; again, the same heavy dragging motion, lasting for five minutes or more; again, the rush through the waters, the curt commands, the manœuvres, and the American boat was tackled for the second time, while her released English rival raced eagerly in pursuit of the untrammelled *Vaterland*. For half an hour, the game was played with a skill that came nigh to obliterating the wrath of the watcher in the ballast tank. What a scheme it was! What an admirably clever scoundrel

this Rosenberg was, and what a very astounding surprise was in store for him! Dyer hugged himself in anticipation of the wrath to come.

Finally, Rosenberg, wiping the perspiration of excitement from his brow, called a halt. With bare steerage way upon her, the submarine lolled along lazily through the fringe of shallows outside Sandy Hook, leaving the yachts to their own devices.

"She has a start of three miles—this boat of ours," grinned Kranzler. "Let her make the most of it. In another hour or two when they are coming back it will be time to inspect and interfere." He and his two companions produced, and fell to upon, a most excellent repast, which provoked frantic envy in Dyer's breast. The last crumb of his biscuits was already gone, and the thirst that his diet of chocolate had stimulated was desperate. The next three hours went by like a sort of nightmare to him.

The submarine was allowed to rise sufficiently above the surface to permit inspection to be made from her upper port. Rosenberg, who was peering anxiously through it, gave a frantic exclamation, popped back upon his seat before the steering-wheel, and twisted the spokes with nervous haste.

"*Himmel!*" he cried. "They are upon us! They are coming along like lightning, neck and neck!"

The engineer sprang to his motor, which began to throb. Rosenberg continued to roar commands at him.

"Sink her!" he cried. "*Tausend Teufeln!* can you not sink her quicker than that? Open the sea-cocks!"

Kranzler, stooping down, knocked upon the planks above the ballast tanks with his fist. The one that contained Dyer gave out a hollow boom. The German captain made an exclamation.

"I thought as much!" he said. "They have not filled up our water ballast!"

The engineer sprang quickly from his place, and turned a little lever. With a hiss and a splash Dyer felt



the water spurting over his body. He realized that his time to make an appearance had come. Kranzler, for the moment, was standing on the plank above his head. He waited till the German had shifted aft, and then, concentrating his muscles for a spring, flung off the wood, and had the upper half of his body through the manhole before the three could utter an exclamation. Rosenberg, his hands upon the wheel, stared at him with eyes that seemed to brim over upon his cheek-bones. His face was ashy white. It was Kranzler who first recovered his self-possession. He flung himself forward to seize the American.

Dyer's hand plunged into his pocket, and the German came to a sudden halt. His fists fell nervelessly to his sides, and he gasped as he stared into the muzzle of the steadily held revolver. Dyer heaved himself out of his prison with great deliberation.

"Now we will go up to the surface, and your fellow-countrymen can take a good look at you," he said to Rosenberg. "Stop those sea-cocks!"

The Jew began to chatter and scream, piteously.

"No, Mr. Dyer, no!" he yammered. "They would lynch me—they would tear me to pieces. For God's sake have pity on me, lieutenant! I'll make it worth your while—a thousand dollars—ten thousand dollars—anything you like to ask——"

"That'll do!" interrupted the American, roughly. "Take her up at once!"

Rosenberg still protested. "No, no!" he screamed. "I daren't—I daren't!"

"Then if you won't, I will," said Dyer, coolly, and, leaning forward, pressed a lever. The submarine rose with a bound as the great leaden false keel dropped from beneath her into the depths.

As the light shot into the observation port, the American sprang upon the iron ladder beneath the manhole, and flung aside the cover. The sea-breeze was fresh upon his face as he emerged upon the glistening steel deck.

He turned, and in turning gave a cry.

Soaring up above him, rushing upon him not fifty feet away, were two mountainous pyramids of canvas, while the two cutwaters that spurned the spray seemed converging upon him like two daggers poised for the blow. The submarine had risen right in the course of the racing yachts!

*Eagle* and *Vaterland*, scudding neck and neck for home, were upon him!

Dyer heard a cry that echoed from below in answer to his own. He had a faint glimpse of the foreman bounding through the manhole, followed by a vision of Rosenberg's ashy face rising into view, to sink back as if snatched from below. Then the shock came. With a grating clash the stems of the yachts smote into the iron shell of the submarine, and Dyer was flung far into the waves and into unconsciousness.

The excitement of the city lasted far into the night. Edition after edition, filled with imaginary details, was tossed from the red-hot printing presses, while, outside the Eclectic, reporters prowled after their prey in vain. Dyer, it was known, was inside, detailing to the committee of the Yacht Club all he knew, and the journalists thirsted after him as a parched desert thirsts for rain.

"Of course, Rosenberg's lie about the submarine put me on the scent in the first place," he said, in conclusion, "and the glimpse I caught, or thought that I caught, of their periscope during the third race, confirmed me. But I'll candidly own that I never even had a suspicion of their device till I had my hands upon it."

Brainton looked at him with a comical smile.

"I am a thickhead, I know," he admitted, "for, after all your description, I'm hanged if I understand *how* they held us, now."

Dyer looked at him, pityingly.

"I thought I'd made it plain enough," he said. "Why, of course, they'd rigged up an electro-magnet.

Your hull is steel, isn't it? So is the *Eagle's*. When he got below you he simply switched the current from the motor into the magnet. He hung there, a few feet below you, dragging at you by attraction as an octopus drags with his suckers. That's plain enough, isn't it?"

Brainton nodded. "Poor chap!" he said, sympathetically. "It seems hard to think he's food for fishes, after displaying all that ingenuity."

"Poor chap!" repeated Dyer, furiously, "poor chap! He was the most unmitigated scoundrel that ever tried to pose as an American citizen!"

Brainton grinned.

"From *your* point of view," he agreed, "but I can't forget that he has at last lifted the cup for England."

Dyer staggered to his feet.

"What?" he shouted, "what?"

Lascom pushed him back upon the couch again.

"That's so, Jim," he said; "but you

needn't worry. While you lay unconscious on board the tug that picked you up, several things happened. Firstly, *Vaierland* and *Eagle* were both smashed by the collision, and three minutes after, the submarine and Rosenberg went down to Davy Jones, Shutlanger's yacht and mine followed them. No lives lost, however. Arthur naturally romped in an easy winner. And, as there isn't another yacht entered, the fifth race is a walk-over."

Dyer covered his face with his hands and groaned.

"It's simply iniquitous luck!" he cried; "simply iniquitous! To think of all the hours I spent in that infernal ballast tank, to give the cup to a Britisher!"

Lascom smiled and patted him on the back.

"There's no need to take it hard," he said, cheerily. "We shall get it back next year for a certainty. And just think if it had been a German!—a *German!*"



## TRIUMPH

SINCE I have loved you, how the darkness flies  
 Out of the very midnight of Life's skies!  
 How all the tumult and the world's dull pain  
 Are hushed and crushed, never to wake again!  
 How still and cold and dead my sorrow lies!

Futile, for me, since I am wonder-wise,  
 Are the old forms that lured me in disguise.  
 How sure my steps, how clean my heart, and sane,  
 Since I have loved you!

Now is life glorious! My soul defies  
 The ancient shackles and the iron ties  
 That one day bound me. All the hosts are slain  
 That hid from me the goodness that has lain  
 In you, O woman-heart! How failure dies  
 Since I have loved you!

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE.

# A QUESTION OF VALUES

By Mrs. Wilson Woodrow

A RICH Ameer once went to the bazaar to purchase a rug. He spent some time in the selection of one that pleased his fancy, and, on the way homeward, cordially congratulated himself on his taste. It was, therefore, somewhat of a surprise to him when the rug began to thank him humbly for his condescension in purchasing it.

"My whole life shall be one continual effort to show thee, who hadst the choice of many rugs, how warmly I appreciate thy selection of poor little me; and, believe me, I ask from life no greater boon than constantly to love and serve thee."

"I can't quite decide where to place thee, beautiful one," said the Ameer, in turn, thoughtfully. "Thou art a desirable article, of course, for my taste in such matters is unexcelled. I think thou mightst fitly adorn the inner court."

"Oh, no, master!" deprecated the rug, "the faultlessness of thy taste, I admit; still, I am not much of a rug—only a poor thing; but thine own. Do not, I implore thee, place me in the inner court. Let me, instead, lie in the outer, where thou mayest wipe thy feet on me. There, I shall be content, feeling in the beautiful words of the poet:

"The heart of my heart beating harder  
with pleasure,  
To feel that you tread it to dust and to  
death!"

"Perhaps," remarked the Ameer, looking reflectively at his new purchase, "that is, after all, the best use to make of thee."

Thereafter, the Ameer daily dusted

his feet upon the rug, and daily the rug cooed to him, and called down blessings on his head for so doing, until at last he harshly bade her cease.

"Miserable door-mat," he cried, "venture no longer even to speak to me. As to the terms of endearment by which thou hast been addressing me, they are the height of presumption. One word more, and I shall have thee beaten, until scarce one shred of thee shall remain."

Then, the rug wept bitterly by night and by day. "Alas!" she cried, "mine is the lot of all loving rugs. We give all, and get nothing. I have lived with but one thought—his happiness; and I am first ignored, and then scorned."

And her grief, coupled with the fact that the Ameer daily wiped his feet more thoroughly and heavily upon her to express his disgust at her intolerable presumption, quite wore her nap off, and she gave up the ghost.

## II

WITHIN a short time after her demise, the Ameer decided that it would be well for him to secure another door-mat, so he again betook himself to the bazaar. As he was in rather a hurry, he purchased the first rug his eyes lighted upon, without any especial examination of it.

Soon after it had been sent to his dwelling, he heard a loud outcry, and hastened to discover the cause. To his surprise, his servants stood cowed and trembling about the new rug,

which was haranguing them in a loud voice.

"Insolent dogs!" it cried, "wild asses shall dance on the graves of thy grandmothers for a thousand years, and ye shall know the torments of all the hells. Ameer, art thou crazed that thou shouldst allow thy servants to place me in thy outer courts as a door-mat?"

The Ameer looked amazed. "I had not thought thee much in the bazaar," he stammered; "it seemed to me there that thy colors were not harmonious enough for the inner courts."

"My colors inharmonious!" shrieked the rug. "Blind fool! what can thy uncultivated eyes know of color? My blues are the soul of mystery, my reds the heart of wine, my yellows the essence of sunlight. Altogether, I am pure, passionate symbolism. Go weep gray, frozen tears in a riot of green emotion that thou art incapable of appreciating me."

Now, the Ameer was a stubborn man, so he continued, falteringly, "But the keeper of the bazaar put no great price on thee."

"The keeper of the bazaar is but in his first incarnation since he was an ape. What can he know of the chromatics of color?"

"And thy texture is rough."

"In truth, thou art possessed of a carping devil," said the rug, impatiently. "There are in me six-hundred thousand stitches to the square inch; but why waste talk on moles and

bats? Count the stitches in each square inch of me, and satisfy thyself."

"Nay," said the Ameer, hastily, "I will take thy word; and now, as I look at thee closely, I perceive that thou art amazingly beautiful. Thy colors shine like rare jewels, and, as I touch thy surface, I comprehend that silk seems harsh compared to it. Assuredly, thou shalt be the ornament of my inner courts."

So, she was tenderly carried within, and spread in the state apartment, and she professed herself well pleased.

A few days later, he hastened to her, full of solicitude. "Is all well? Art happy, fair one?" he asked, anxiously.

"Nay," she answered, peevishly; "in this, thy state apartment, I am as a ruby in a pig-sty. I must have a temple built for me."

"Oh, fair one!" said the Ameer, in wondering admiration; "how true are thy words! This wretched apartment is an insult to thy beauty."

Then, he gave the half of his kingdom to the building of a shrine of fairest marble, and within it was hung the rug with a curtain before it of cloth-of-gold, encrusted with jewels; and, there, the Ameer thanked the Prophet, morning, noon and night, that one so humble as himself had been chosen to be the possessor of the Desire of the World.

MORAL.—Do not allow the world to ticket you. Tags of one's own manufacture are quite as acceptable.



## THE ALTERNATIVE

FRIEND—You have made your bed, and you will have to lie in it.  
THE DEFENDANT—Not if I can lie out of it.



THE blind pianist plays with much feeling.

# THE MILLS OF THE GODS

By Edna Kenton

CLEMENTS lay back in his invalid's chair, and watched his wife hungrily as she arranged before his mirror some simple bit of drapery that was not yet quite simple enough. He was wearier to-night than usual. There was some reception or other on; perhaps it was a dinner. He had known, but he had forgotten, and he hesitated about asking Leone to repeat things. Leone was easily wearied, too, and, in these days of his recognized invalidism, he was careful as never before not to bring on her brow that little contraction which told her ennui and annoyance.

She stood straight and tall before the mirror. Her pale-green satin gown fell in the straightest of folds about her, and from the sea-foam green of its bodice, her neck and shoulders rose like a sea-shell. Her eyes were beryl; her hair was shining gold; her skin was warm white; and her lips were red—rich, scarlet, cherry-red, alluring, Lorelei-like. It was a peculiar beauty they gave the pale face on which they bloomed.

At last, she turned from the dressing-table. "Is there anything you want me to do for you, before I go?" she asked, carelessly.

Clements stared, blankly. Want! What was there he did not want! A sudden, fierce anger swept over him, anger at the jeering fate that had played with him and his delight in life, and then had flung him down in this detested room, with only its walls and memory for companions. A duller pain followed the anger, a painful shrinking from the loneliness of the oncoming night.

"Suppose I should ask you to take off those pearls and that gown, and sit down here—" He stopped, and began to cough. He tried to check the paroxysm, for he knew it was something she could hardly endure to hear. Under her slow gaze, half-wondering, half-satirical, he gained strength to speak.

"Go on, Lee. It almost maddens me at times, that's all; this, and you like that. But because a poor devil is chained to his rock is no reason for his demanding angels from heaven to keep him company."

Mrs. Clements came swiftly over to him. "Poor boy!" she said, tenderly. She put her hand on his brow, and withdrew it hastily. The cold moisture chilled the very marrow of her, and she shuddered. Clements bit his lip, savagely. He turned toward the wall where the lights were not.

"There, there!" he said. "It's just a growl from a brute that's only half tamed. Go on, my dear."

Mrs. Clements looked at him with remorse and shrinking. Then she visibly braced herself, and, bending over him, all shaking as he was with the rending cough he was holding in till she should be gone, she gave him a tiny, perfunctory kiss.

"Get to sleep early to-night," she said, kindly.

He called her back as she was about to leave the room. "Jackson told me the Joker had something the matter with her," he said, inquiringly. His tone was as perfunctory as her kiss.

Mrs. Clements shrugged her shoulders. She did it like a Frenchwoman born. "It's nothing but a hard cold that may mean grippe or something



equally annoying," she said, briefly. "She's doing all right."

Through his half-closed lids, Clements watched her soft skirts trail their slim, lynx way out of the room. Through the open door, he heard Jackson's voice announcing the carriage. There was another voice below, a merry, virile voice.

"Undine, fair Undine!" it called up the stairway. "How's old Clem to-night?"

There was a pause filled with rapid murmurings. Then Leone, cloaked and wrapped, appeared once more.

"Do you want to see Rial to-night?" she asked.

Clements hesitated. "I'm too tired," he said, at last, shortly. "Good night."

He lay there straining his ears to hear her going down the stairs, the soft murmur at the foot when Rial Glover met her, the final closing of the door behind them. Nay, he even harkened achingly to the very sound of the horses' hoofs upon the icy pavement. Then he gave himself up to the rack-ing cough.

It was nearly half a year now since he had given up business, and consented to try what idling about the house would do for him. The result was to-day precisely what the doctors had predicted it would be. He had refused to listen to their prescription, though he ached sometimes with the longing to try it. The wild, free Arizona life, the wonderful air, they asserted, would go straight through his lungs, so weary with trying to breathe the heavy city atmosphere, smoke-laden and dirty and without vitality. They had drawn pictures for him of a little mountain cabin on a piney mountain side, with no human being in sight or sound; no railroad to make him wonder about stocks; no telegraph wires to put him in touch with the strident world of business; no doctors to worry him with stethoscopes and the rest of their impressive equipment. Yet he had given it all up because of another picture of his own; two, in fact. One was the picture of Arizona, with all

its allurements, its cabin, its ozone, its mountains, its solitude, and without Leone. For Leone would be in New York—writing to him, ah, yes; but what would letters be without the sound of her voice, the touch of her magnetic fingers, the soft yielding of her slender body? The other picture was of Arizona and the cabin and the ozone and the mountains, and Leone. Yes, and the solitude. For it would be a pallid creature who would dwell with him in the mountain lodge, a creature devoid of mirth and life, still and lifeless against her hated background of primitive life. That would be solitude indeed. For Leone was a hot-house exotic that could not bear transplanting.

So he defied the doctors. He forbade them to whisper to his wife a hint of their desire for him, and for six months he struggled on in luxurious rooms, praying, agonizing for just enough breath to sustain life, no more. All because he feared loneliness. And, after all, had not solitude stolen upon him!

Night after night, since the season opened, this of to-night had been the programme. Leone came in dressed and ready. There was usually a touch to add, and she had a whimsical fancy for his mirror, which ever so slightly exaggerated the long lines to which she was addicted. She would stand there and fluff up and pat down with absorbed interest, and he would watch her with hollow eyes that burned with longing to spring up and join her in the care-free chase of pleasure they had run together for so long. Then she always asked him if he wanted anything of her, and he always answered no—always till to-night; and then came the tiny kiss, and the carriage, and nearly always Rial, good old Rial. College chumship had a sentimental twang about the words, but there was no doubting the value of it. Then, for her, a night of pleasure such as she loved and lived on, and, for him, hours of weary tossing and wakeful dreaming till he heard her come again. One early morning, she had burst into a

passion of self-reproachful tears when she found him waiting for her at three o'clock, and since then he tried to seem stirless when she peeped softly in at him before going away to her own rest. Then the long morning hours, when she lay asleep and the whole household moved velvet-shod therefor. And, at last, there came Leone, in soft, clinging things, talking gaily, more and more gaily as the weeks stole on, of last night's happenings, of Carter Hapgood's message, of the *bon mot* Charlie Horton unintentionally made. Sometimes her chocolate would be brought to her there, and she would read her letters beside him, and her voice would be as delicious to him as the caressing of velvet. Then the round of teas and calls and all that made her life. And then the evening, and Leone bedight, and the carriage, and nearly always Rial, and the long waiting, and the silent home-coming—

Something made him lift his head at length from his thin, white hands. It was no sound that disturbed him, for the room was silent, and the little figure motionless that stood before him. He stared at it dully for a moment. Thin and spidery as to limbs and body, sallow skin, an unkempt mane of hair, in color like a dusty potato, eyes that for colorlessness matched the hair, lips that were pale and singularly unchildish—such was the single fruit of their passionate love, his and Leone's. He laughed aloud, harshly.

"Come here," he said. The child looked gravely at him. She gathered her scant little nightgown from about her bare feet.

"Come here," he repeated. She looked wistfully toward the door. Her hesitancy angered him. "Come here," he called, imperatively.

He stared her all over again as she came reluctantly up to him. Yes, Fate had cracked one of its wildest jokes when it had caused his beautiful Leone to bring forth this unattractive little mass of much bone, some flesh, and less blood. She had his eyes

without their brown; her mother's lips without their red; the hair of a nobody, and the general color scheme of an ash-heap. She stood his gaze with unchildish composure and unchildish indifference.

"Are you afraid of me?" he asked, at length. She lifted her ashen eyes.

"I'm not afraid of anything," she said, gravely.

"Your mother said you had something the matter with you," he went on. "What made you get up out of bed then?"

"It's such a little cold," the child said, earnestly. "If She was about me, She'd know it wasn't anything to fuss over. She always makes Maggie keep me in bed if I so much as sneeze."

"Your mother is anxious about you," said Clements, lamely.

"No," the child answered, slowly; "She isn't anxious at all. She's just afraid that something may happen to me and She'll be blamed for it, so She has Maggie take ridiculous care of me for nothing." She nodded her head, sapiently.

Clements looked slightly startled. Then he laughed, shortly.

"You talk like a witch-woman, Joker," he said, with a ghastly gaiety. "How old are you?"

The Joker did not hear the question. She was scanning him with wistful, sorrowful eyes. His head was again on his hands. "Let me think," he murmured. "It was just a little before Christmas of that first year, in the little cottage on the Hudson, that the Joker descended on us—great heavens!" For the first time in his life, he saw the Joker in a fury. She advanced on him with stamping feet, her ashen eyes turned suddenly to points of leaping flame.

"I hate that name!" she cried, passionately. "I'm not anybody. Maggie calls me Babe, and you call me that, and She calls me that to you. Why, why, why?"

Clements reached carefully, and by an undignified grab lifted her to his lap. "Why, why, why?" he repeated, musingly. "I have a great mind to

deal honestly with you, Joker, as man to man. You seem able to stand that sort of treatment without making a scene. In the first place, your mother and I were perfectly happy without you. Neither of us ever thought seriously of the chance of our doing so commonplace a thing as perpetuating our unhappy species. But the unexpected, to us at least, occurred. You occurred, a little red monkey that turned from red to pink, and pink to gray, and stayed there. And when I looked at your mother and then at you, and when your mother looked at me and then at you, you were certainly the odd card in the pack. And that's the Joker, as everybody knows."

"You haven't told me anything so new," said the Joker, with a composure that Clements admired unstintedly in view of the fact that her chin was quivering piteously. "You were a very good-looking man, till you got sick, you were, and She's a beautiful lady, and I'm just as ugly as they ever grow. You're the only one that ever calls me Joker to my face, though."

Clements winced at her stinging reference to the ravages of his disease. "What does She call you?" he asked. He fell temporarily into the Joker's invariable custom of giving her mother a capitalized feminine gender and nothing more.

"Nothing."

"Not even when She scolds?"

"I don't do things to make her scold. I don't stay anywhere but by myself, and when She comes in once in a while to say good night, I mostly lie still. That makes me lonelier, though, than if She didn't come at all."

Clements laughed, grimly. "I can fancy it might," he said. "Since She's gone for the night, though, do you think it would make you feel any less lonely if I were to kiss you good night?"

The Joker pondered. "You never have kissed me," she said, at last.

Clements, *paterfamilias*, smiled, sardonically. "I don't recall the pleasure," he said, politely. The Joker colored sensitively, and he was immedi-

ately ashamed of himself. He pushed her away from him to the very point of his knee, and held her there, firmly, while he looked steadily into her eyes.

"You and I— I did not know, Joker, there was another poor, lonely devil under this roof. This morning, about two o'clock, She'll come in to tell me good night. I shall have been tossing all the long hours through, waiting for the rustle of her gown along the hall, and then, Joker, when She opens the door, I, too, shall lie still."

The Joker listened, soberly. As he finished, she slipped along his knee in a snuggling fashion that seemed only instinctive and experimental.

"That's why I stopped in to-night. You looked lonesome, and I was hungry, and I wanted Maggie and something to eat—" She felt herself suddenly thrust aside. Clements pushed her away.

"Here," he said, savagely. "Take your fruit and go." He pushed a great plate of grapes toward her.

The Joker stared in amazement. A wondrous contempt stole slowly into her eyes. "I got out of bed because I was hungry," she said, clearly, "and I came in here because I was sorry for you." She walked in a stately little fashion toward the door.

"Come back," Clements called. "Come back here." A heavy fit of coughing choked him. By the time he could speak or call again, the child was gone.

## II

MRS. CLEMENTS came languidly into her husband's sick-room the next morning. She had her hands full of letters, and she sank lazily down on a couch, and began reading them without any preliminary chat. Clements watched her through half-closed lids, wondering half idly if he might, perchance, find about her any of that irradiating halo of which poets have sung as enveloping motherhood. From her golden head to her delicate foot, she was the girl of his boyish dreams, the lady

of his passionate love, his sweetheart, his wife. But the Joker's mother—perish the thought! And why should he seek for that so late, the nameless grace that theoretically softens all womanhood and makes it lovely? Had he ever encouraged the maternal in her; ever desired that she give up one of the hours he so proudly called his to the unwelcomed babe? Not only had he not desired it—he had insisted that her strength and beauty should not be spent in thankless care of a small, ape-like creature whose presence on earth was due to chance and nothing more. If she had shown overweening maternal love, he would have crushed it down and out. But in this, as in all else, they had been united. She, too, had shrunk from giving up their rapturous hours for the sake of a crooning, crying baby. Once in a while, she prodded the quiescent body of the child with a speculative forefinger, and by so much had she approached nearer to a caress of it than he. She detested helplessness. Nursery odors made her ill. Sickness and tears and close atmospheres— Had he any right, then, to complain, to feel aggrieved if, after so many years of careful cultivation in selfish ease, she shrank at length from a helpless man, his nervous fancies, his shut-in quarters? He clenched his hands tightly, and assured himself he was only facing a possible contingency. Yet a curious refrain sang through his brain: "The mills of the gods, the mills of the gods!"

Suddenly, he spoke. "What was she christened, Lee?"

Mrs. Clements looked up, blankly. He caught her amazed eyes.

"The Joker, the Joker," he said, impatiently. Still his wife stared.

"Do you know," she said, slowly, "that this is the first interested question you've ever asked about her in her life?"

Clements felt himself flush. "Who could have answered them?" he asked, quickly. "What was she named?"

"She was never named," said his wife, shortly.

He looked aghast. Then he laughed, softly. "This is beyond paganism," he murmured. "Come, Lee, didn't we ever make up some sort of a name for her? She can't have gone all this time as the Joker and nothing more. How many years is it?"

Mrs. Clements's slender limbs twitched slightly, a danger signal that Clements did not choose to notice. "She must be about ten years old," she said, crisply. "Until she was two, we thought rather seriously of calling her Lillian Grace. Then we decided—I decided—that it was inappropriate. By that time your own name for her, which you are decrying to-day, had become a settled thing, and it was singularly fitting. So it lasted. I never renamed her, and I'm sure you didn't."

"It was the twenty-first of December," said Clements, slowly. "She'll be ten years old to-morrow."

"Perhaps she will," said his wife, indifferently.

"She's an ugly little thing," he went on. His wife stirred again. "She's still and stupid-looking, and yet she thinks, and she's got the pack of us well sized up, or I'm no seer. Did she ever have a birthday gift, Lee?"

Mrs. Clements sat upright, angry annoyance written all over her.

"What has brought out this drivel about the humiliation of my life?" she demanded. "No, I never gave her a birthday gift. I never gave her a kiss willingly. I never gave her a name. I shoved her away from me as soon as I saw her. The sight of her sickened me. You wouldn't let me nurse her, and I refused to before you forbade it. She ought to have died then. But she thrived on city milk, messy foods, anything and everything."

"That is, she didn't die on them," interposed Clements, drily. "She has malnutrition written over every inch of her."

"She has not," said Mrs. Clements, flatly. "She had a good nurse. But she gives me the creeps. She gives you the colly-wobbles. Neither of us

ever wanted her, and she has sense enough not to bother."

"She came into my room last night," said Clements, suddenly. "She said she saw me sitting here, and she felt sorry for me."

Mrs. Clements looked swiftly away. What was mirrored through her eyes at that moment no man can say. When she looked back, Clements was sitting with his hollow, dark-ringed eyes fastened mournfully on the rug at his feet. A wave of feeling, half terror, half longing, distorted her face. She threw herself on her knees by him.

"Oh, Dick!" she cried, with a sob in her throat; "get up and come about with me as you used to. Don't yield to this frightful illness. We used to be so happy together. But sickness is so horrible——"

Clements's hand gripped her hard. "Do you know what the doctors say," he demanded, softly, "that if I go West for a year, I'll be well?"

She looked up with eyes suddenly burned dry. "Then why—" she said, painfully.

"Because," said Clements, "there are some things harder to face than death." He watched her face go pale.

"Do the doctors say—must I—go—alone—with you?" she asked.

Clements dropped her hand suddenly, and leaned back, smiling. "The doctors have said nothing about you, nor have I. Get up, Lee. It's no matter."

"But you'd get well out there," she whispered. Clements suddenly felt pitiful.

"I'm not so sure. Don't tremble so, my dear. It's all right."

She looked straight into his eyes. "If I could say this moment, and mean it, that I'd go with you, you'd start to-morrow."

"But you can't mean it," he said, gently. "Never mind. Perhaps, after all, I shall go out there in the Spring, get up courage to go away and leave you with Rial."

He smiled at her, cheerfully, and pinched the cheek nearest him to

bring some color back to it. Leone's head went down on his arm. When she lifted it, she looked ill and old. She got up heavily.

"I must go now," she said. "Here are some roses and your drops and some fresh handkerchiefs. Good-bye, dear." She kissed him yearningly, and, as she went away, he followed her with his dark, hollow eyes, more comforted than he had been for many a day. And yet beneath the lulling comfort lay despair.

### III

THE next day, he waited till after his wife's noon visit. Then he rang for Jackson.

"Ask Miss Clements to come to me," he said.

The man looked appalled. "Miss—" he stammered.

Clements turned toward him. "Don't I make myself clear, Jackson?" he asked, calmly.

Some five minutes later, the door went slowly open to disclose the Joker. It was a very shabby Joker to look at, but she had made a brave attempt at brightening up a faded blue frock with a scarlet sash that belonged, with the frock, to days long past. Clements groaned within him as he saw the combination, but he stifled his esthetic horror, and, reaching round behind some pillows, he brought forth a marvelous doll which he held out to her awkwardly.

"It's your birthday to-day," he said, stammeringly. "Thought you might like something. It's a doll, Joker." She approached with hesitation, and he went on: "Here's some candy, too, and a dog that barks."

The Joker took the doll in her arms, the bonbons in one hand and the woolly animal in the other, and over them all stared helplessly. Only a moment, then Clements gave way and roared. He tossed the doll and the dog to the couch, and took the candy and the Joker on his knee.



"What's wrong?" he asked, comfortably.

"Did you know I'm ten years old, even if I am little?" the Joker asked, soberly. "I'm much obliged, though," she added, in haste.

Over her unconscious head, Clements grinned placidly. "You see," he began, politely, "I don't know you very well, Miss Clements, and I don't realize how old ten years of life can make one. I've known young women your age to have nine distinct spasms over an elegant lady such as that one yonder. Perhaps you'll let me enjoy the candy, even if you are above such childish joys."

The Joker allowed a faint smile to flicker over her pale lips. She reached over, and pulled off the lid. "Help yourself," she said. Yet while he was devouring his choice, she sat with her almond-powdered bonbon held moistly in her hand, and surveyed him, quietly.

"I think," she said, at length, "I'm going to like you some."

"Let me return the warm feeling," said Clements, gravely. "And right here let me ask your pardon for the unpardonable blunder I committed the other night. I had no reason whatever to think you wanted those grapes, and I'm positive you didn't even so much as see them till I pushed them toward you."

"I'm not a pig," said the Joker, with serene acceptance of the apology due her. "I just knew from the way things felt that you were lonely, and it doesn't feel good—to feel lonely."

"Then, Joker," said Clements, promptly, "let's start out fair and square, wipe the board clean for a new account."

She held out a slim little hand, which he took with a queer smile. "Another thing," he went on, "about that name of yours—"

She flushed, slowly. "I guess the Joker is as good as any," she said, hurriedly, "and I guess it'll be pleasanter not to talk about that to-day. I don't mind it now, anyway."

The hours slipped away, and still the man of thirty and the child of ten talked or were silent as the mood seized them. After Maggie had taken her away, and before the lights were brought in, Clements sat musing on the quaintnesses of the eerie little thing, his own flesh, his own blood. He felt a mad anger at himself, an eating shame. The child had not been blind. She had seen and judged, not unkindly, not bitterly, only with a wondering philosophy. Yet under the childish judgment he writhed. He wondered if Leone knew, or, knowing, cared.

The growing friendship was almost a week old before Mrs. Clements discovered it. She came home early one afternoon, and went straight to Clements's rooms. As she pushed open the door, an astounding sight met her eyes. Down on the rug before the fire were Dick and the Joker, both laughing with abandon, both eagerly engaged in teaching a small, lively poodle the gentle art of jumping over a stick. The laughter died in the child's throat as she saw the lovely woman above her. She looked anxiously at her father, still busy with the lesson.

"There!" he said, in huge delight, as the small body rolled over the slender cane. "Try it yourself, Joker, upstairs. And now skedaddle!"

As the door closed on the child, he turned to his wife. "Can't you find time to see about some decent clothes for the little beggar, Lee?" he asked. "She hasn't a thing but rags of night-gowns, and you let her wear blue calico frocks—blue!"

Mrs. Clements was fresh from a polite crush. She had on a sage-green velvet gown with much sable about it, and a startling dash of geranium-red. She looked at Clements, queerly.

"Have you just made the astounding discovery that you are a father, and has that ordinary fact turned your head? This child, under your roof for ten long years, never entered into a thought of yours till a week ago."

"Guilty, your honor," said Clements, drily. "But the Joker and I have dis-

covered one tiny bond between us, one common feeling."

Mrs. Clements battled against the asking of the question, but it came forth in spite of her.

"And the bond—?" There was a sneer in her voice.

"We're both lonely, Lee."

#### IV

AFTER that night, Mrs. Clements came less and less often to the sick-room. First, she stopped her nightly visits on her return from opera or ball. Then she almost imperceptibly dropped her long-time custom of coming in all her evening glory. There came at last a day when she sent word that she had risen late, and was due even then at Sherry's. Would Mr. Clements excuse her noon visit this once? When that message was brought him, Clements sent the Joker away, and gave himself up to deliberate meditation.

Somehow, he seemed to see clearly, for the first time, the parting of the ways. She had tried to be faithful to the wraith of their past joys long after they had faded into ghostliness. Yet the end was coming on. Almost did he know what it would be. Nothing to occasion outside talk and comment—there was no need for that. Neither of them wished it. Their whole pitiful story was only a part of the inevitable law of restless change that rules the universe. He struck his hand sharply against his chair arm. What had come to him that he could calmly sit and think out platitudes on universal law with this thing staring him in the face, the thing that only two months before he would have cried out against and groaned over, and, in the face of it, forgotten his manhood? Yet now he felt content. So had he heard men resign themselves when life, with its joys and sorrows, is past for them.

Yet for him the cause, the cause! Had he done with life and all that made life dear? No, a thousand times, no! He felt the blood leap within his veins, healthfully, yearningly. There rose

before him a queer little face, angular and drab in contour and coloring, yet the eyes of which could sparkle with a life and love and friendliness that was all for him. He laughed to himself as his nostrils dilated, stung with the tang of mountain pines. There was the easy way—the mountain bungalow and life and health and the Joker. Then, by-and-bye, with health regained, and the wonderful arts the god of absences is past-master of—yes, yes, it must be that! He and she had sinned against this child of theirs, but against each other—no! His was the blame if she were heartless, even to him. Yet his punishment, deserved though it was, had been tempered. His little Joker, his by birth, his by discovery! Not his child, but his little friend who called him Boy! The purest passion of Clements's life was holding him in thrall.

With the early evening came Leone. She wore again that sea-green gown. Against her breast there lay a single rose that matched her lips. She came into the room, drawing on her long, green gloves. Clements listened to her, idly, impersonally. For the nonce, she stood for the gay world he had given up, had even pushed churlishly away. A sudden longing interest in it seized him. How were they all, Carter Hapgood and Harrison and Rial, and all the rest?

"Tell me about them," he said, impulsively, and named them over. It was the first time in months he had shown an interest in the outside world, and Leone looked at him with a startled light in her eyes. Carter was the same, she told him, and Jim Harrison. Yes, Rial was in town. Where else should he be? Would Dick please try what he could do with that lower button? It was always so refractory. That make of gloves she detested, anyway, but the green she wanted was a peculiar shade and hard to find. Then the carriage came, and she gathered up her shimmering skirts, and went quickly away, and only when the door closed did Clements remember what she had forgotten. For the first time

since these four walls shut him in, she had failed to kiss him when she left him. He smiled, grimly. Things were happening with a vengeance nowadays. Undine, Undine, Undine! Who had called her that, and when and how? How it fitted, sea-green gown and soulless body! Ah, well, there was a tiny child above with a growing spirit too big for her. He rang quickly for the Joker.

Twice, Maggie came for her charge that night, and was finally sent away. Her father would see Miss Clements to bed. It was near to twelve o'clock when the Joker, lying curled before the dancing fire, began to dream aloud.

"I'd like to see just ground some time," she murmured, slowly, "where the sky comes down all around, and there isn't anything to stick up and spoil it. I'd like to see the sun set there, and the sun rise, and some big buffalo running like mad along the edge right against the sun. That'd be fine, Boy. And some mountains by-and-bye, shooting straight up in the clouds, and me and you all alone there, Boy—just me and you, and nobody else. That'd be finest of all. I wouldn't mind sleeping on the ground with you, and the cough would stop, Boy, and the fever—and She wouldn't mind—and the sky'd come and hide us away—and we'd be so happy, Boy—"

It was after two o'clock when Clements roused himself, and stooped down to gather the sleeping Joker into his arms. How strong he felt, how full of determination to live! He opened the door carefully and went out into the hall. Her little drab head stirred restlessly against his breast. As he closed his door behind him, he heard the front doors softly open. He looked down into the hall. All the servants were long since in bed. She had let herself in. There she stood, wrapped from head to foot in a long, red cloak, and behind her, lifting it lingeringly from her shoulders, stood Rial Glover. Clements demanded instantly of himself why it was strange, and instantly decided it was not strange. The only odd thing about it all was the lower button of that sea-green glove. Rial

was busy with it now, and Clements smiled to himself in the shadow. Then, all in one blinding second, it happened; the thrilling touch, the electrical glance, the sudden catching up of her hands, Rial's swift cry, the lithe swaying of her body toward him. Then the long, long kiss!

Clements was recalled to himself by a stir within his arms. He looked down. The only bond between him and that beautiful creature below lay in his arms, staring with wide and seeing eyes upon her mother and her father's friend. And at that moment, swayed a little by Glover's arms, Leone looked up and saw them both.

Clements stumbled back into the room he had so lately left. Within him raged a tempest so fierce that the Joker felt its might—a tempest whose cause he could not lie away to her, nor palliate by smooth-sounding words. She was only a child now, but what she could not understand she would not forget. He could have cursed aloud in his black rage as she lay, a small knot of sympathetic nerve tension, in his arms. What a memory to bear away with her! For he was comforting her, and trying to lull his own pain with murmured snatches of hurried plannings.

"We'll start to-morrow, dear, and find it, the land of mountains and sunsets—with the cruel world behind us, its treacheries and deceits. We'll have each other, dear, just each other." And he watched the heavy eyelids droop more and more over the eyes that were so sadly wise. Yet, before they closed, he saw within their hungry depths a look at last of absolute content.

It might have been hours that he sat there. One by one, the embers grew gray. At last, he saw the door before him unclose and finally go wide. There she stood, her eyes strained and wild, her cheeks pallid. But her lips gleamed with their old, alluring scarlet, and on them, and back of the fear in her eyes, there lurked a defiance ready to come boldly forth—the desperate resolve of a tigress who sees at last the

door of her captive cage ajar. Clements gripped his child closer as he looked. A fierce anger against the woman, against her sin to him, rose and died down like the leap of a flame. How should he cast a stone?

As she came into the room, he held up his hand warningly. He gathered the Joker's shabby little garments about her, and carried her caretully into his bedroom. He laid her gently down, and, for a few moments, stood above her. A quiet peace stole over

him as he looked, a peace that drove away all the frantic torment, the agony of shame, of trust betrayed, that had racked him since he had seen with his own eyes. His fatherhood was his to redeem. For that which awaited him out yonder he felt suddenly strong. He threw back his shoulders into a shadowy simulation of the old, vigorous Dick Clements. Then he went back to the sitting-room, back to the ashen hearth before which stood his wife.



## ACCORDING TO ORDERS

TO the Architect's office, the Millionaire  
Climbed merrily up by the winding stair.  
"I have found," said he, "by the shore of the sea,  
The jolliest place for a house to be,  
On the edge of a picturesque jungle, O!  
I know how I want it—don't *you* interfere!  
A portico there and a chimney here—  
I'll make you a plan, Mr. Architect man,  
And then by my orders, as well as you can,  
You shall build me a sweet little bungalow!"

The Architect bowed—he was poor, though proud—  
And the house arose like a Summer cloud.  
But, at last, to visit the spot allowed,  
He tore his hair, did the Millionaire,  
And the language he used in his fierce despair  
Was innocent wholly of gilding, O!  
"What a horrible mess you have made!" he cried.  
"The roof is too low, and the chimney too wide!  
You can't get in and you can't get out—  
Pray, what in the world were you thinking about,  
To build such a botch of a building, O!"

Then the Architect hid, as architects may,  
The fiendish joy in his heart that lay;  
And, "Alas!" said he, "I am grieved to see  
Your dream is not all that a dream should be,  
Of a house on the edge of the jungle, O!  
But as for me, I have done my best  
To follow your very unique behest:  
You made the plan, Mr. Millionaire man,  
And I think you'll admit that—as well as I can—  
I have built you a sweet little bungle, O!"

MARGARET JOHNSON.

# LES ROSES

Par Albert Boissière

CLAUDE se prit la tête à deux mains, ce qui est, d'une façon générale, la position la plus naturelle, afin d'un grand effort de réflexion; mais il avait beau presser ses tempes pour en faire jaillir une idée précise, les pensées les plus contradictoires, les plus déraisonnables suppositions tournaient en rond, dans sa cervelle pauvre, sans trouver d'issue... Et, dans cette posture fatigante, les coudes aux genoux, plié en deux sur sa chaise, c'est dans le bout de ses souliers vernis qu'il mirait son inquiétude... Quelles raisons Mme Brienne allait-elle inventer pour lui refuser la main de Claire?... A lui, Claude, le camarade d'enfance, le familier de la maison, Pierre Brienne avait dit, la veille: "Mon vieux Claude, tu sais si je t'aime... et lorsque tu m'as fait part de tes intentions, à propos de Claire, j'ai été, à cette seconde-là, le plus heureux des hommes... Les femmes te trouvent joli garçon... moi, je connais ton cœur, à fond, puisque tu es mon meilleur ami... tu as assez de fortune pour être indépendant, ce qui n'est pas à dédaigner... Bref, tu résumes, à mon avis, toutes les qualités pour faire le bonheur de ma sœur, la chère orpheline, dont je suis le tuteur autant moral que légal... Eh bien! non, mon ami, il paraît que je ne suis pas toute la famille... il paraît que tout cela n'est pas suffisant... et, lorsque j'ai glissé la demande à ma femme, voici ce que Geneviève m'a répondu: 'Je crois que c'est impossible!...' Je ne me suis pas arrêté à l'argument, tu penses bien, et j'ai demandé les motifs de l'impossibilité; et Geneviève a ajouté:

'Ce sont des raisons de femmes... Je les expliquerai à notre ami, s'il le désire, et il se rendra à ces raisons...' Alors, tu comprends, mon vieux Claude, que je ne pouvais pas insister... Il y a des délicatesses que nous ignorons, nous autres hommes... C'est toi l'intéressé, c'est à toi de plaider ta cause... Ce que je te souhaite de tout mon cœur, c'est d'être éloquent et de la gagner... Vois Geneviève...'

...Claude allait voir Mme Brienne... Il se leva à un bruit de pas, dans la pièce voisine... Machinalement, ses regards allèrent vers la porte et, dans l'encoignure, au-dessus d'une stèle élégante, ses regards s'arrêtèrent sur une potiche de grès où mouraient des roses pâles... Et Claude reconnut la mince gerbée qu'il avait envoyée, le matin même, à Mme Brienne, comme une offrande aux dieux courroucés, pour se la rendre propice... Des roses! c'étaient ses fleurs préférées... Eh! il le savait bien, le camarade d'enfance de Pierre Brienne... C'était lui-même qui, jadis—voilà deux ans, au moment des fiançailles de Pierre—avait su découvrir le goût de Geneviève, chez les parents de qui il fréquentait—à l'exemple de Pierre... Plus d'une fois, en confident dévoué, en ami sûr, il avait fait l'emplette des chères fleurs, à sa place—à la place de l'autre—avec un goût exquis et un tact parfait, les appariant à la couleur du jour et au sourire de la veille... Et ce souvenir aimable lui parut, à cette minute hostile, comme une évocation sans charme, sans parfum, désenchantée...

...Il se retourna. Mme Brienne



était devant lui, lui tendait une main amie... — C'est gentil à vous d'être venu... — C'est brave, surtout, dit Claude... Et, précipitamment, prenant les devants... — Voulez-vous être bien franche et me répondre avec toute votre amitié? demanda-t-il... Et si vous avez pressenti Claire sur ses sentiments, et si les sentiments de Claire ne sont pas en harmonie avec les miens, dites-le-moi... formellement, franchement... car j'ai beau me creuser la tête, je ne vois pas d'autre motif à la réponse équivoque de Pierre... — Je n'ai point pressenti la sœur de mon mari, répondit Mme Brienne en s'asseyant et en faisant asseoir le jeune homme auprès d'elle... parce qu'il y a trop peu de différence d'âge entre nous deux, que j'aurais assurément manqué d'autorité pour le faire et que c'eût, peut-être, été périlleux... de la pressentir... — Périlleux pour moi? fit Claude, d'un ton navré. — Pour vous et pour elle... — Je ne comprends pas. — Vous allez comprendre... Vous venez de parler de franchise et de bravoure... Je n'en manquerai pas... Entre un galant homme et une honnête femme, la bravoure peut aller jusqu'à la témérité... — C'est un secret? demanda Claude, inquiet du tour que prenait la conversation. — Professionnel, dit Geneviève, souriante... — Je le garderai. — Mieux. Promettez-moi plutôt de l'oublier, aussitôt que vous l'aurez reçu. — Je vous le promets. — Vous imaginez, reprit Mme Brienne, qu'il m'est encore aisé de m'assimiler l'état d'âme de Claire qui est la sœur de toutes mes pensées, et que mes deux années de mariage ne sont pas un recul trop désavantageux pour bien voir."

...Elle fit une pause et tourna, tout à coup décidée: — Vous rappelez-vous, Claude, lorsque Pierre demanda ma main? — J'étais reçu chez vous, et sa joie fut un peu la mienne, dit le jeune homme. — Oui, ce qui revient à dire que vous auriez pu demander ma main, à sa place, et qu'en cas d'acceptation votre joie eût été exactement celle de Pierre, riposta

Geneviève avec enjouement. — Permettez, il y a une nuance... — Pour vous, mais pour la jeune fille que j'étais, la nuance était si indécise... si indécise... que je ne me fais point trop honte, lorsque j'y pense encore, aujourd'hui... avec le recul..."

Claude, surpris d'une pareille révélation, regarda Mme Brienne avec des yeux où toutes les interrogations étaient permises; et Geneviève répondit, avec franchise, à toutes ces interrogations muettes...

— Non, mon cher ami, ne vous méprenez point sur le sens de mes paroles, et n' imaginez pas trop vite que je vous aie aimé. — Je n'ai pas cette fatuité, interrompit Claude. — Ni que je vous aie même secrètement préféré..." Elle hésita, fit un effort visible, eut un joli geste de gaminerie insouciant et lâcha...

"Quoique à la rigueur..." Claude rougit légèrement... et Mme Brienne, déjà lasse d'en avoir trop dit, fit dévier l'aveu, tout en l'accentuant... "Tenez, Claude, ce sont les roses que vous m'avez envoyées, ce matin, qui me rappellent la nuance. — La nuance? — Oui. Et ce sont ces roses qui me rappellent les roses que Pierre m'envoyait, jadis, quotidiennement, avant notre mariage... et que vous aviez devinées, vous, mes fleurs de prédilection... alors que lui n'avait pas eu cette divination. — Comment! vous saviez? — Oui. Il me l'apprit, un soir, lui-même... avec une maladresse touchante et qui m'égratigna comme d'une douleur passagère."

...Les yeux baissés, après un temps, elle corrigea: "Car il n'y a que les maladroits pour être vraiment sincères." Et elle se tut, émue de sa bravoure; et Claude se tut, de même, ému du secret léger... léger à porter. Ils n'osaient se regarder en face, le galant homme et l'honnête femme, parce qu'ils jugeaient, l'un et l'autre, que la témérité a des bornes. Et comme le silence les enveloppait d'une atmosphère lourde et prenante, Geneviève, la première, secoua la torpeur où sa bravoure courait les risques de s'amollir... "Comprenez-vous,

maintenant, Claude, dit-elle, ayant repris une certaine assurance dans la voix, combien il est dangereux de pressentir une jeune fille, sur des sentiments si ténus, si variables, si secrets et si imprécis qu'elle-même s'abuse souvent, hélas! sur leur réalité mensongère, ou, si vous aimez mieux, sur leur apparence vraie? — Mais enfin, Geneviève, s'écria Claude avec vivacité et pressé de tenir sa promesse et d'oublier le secret qu'il venait de recevoir... moi, j'aime Claire; j'aime Claire, comme Pierre vous aimait. — D'accord, mon ami, dit Mme Brienne; mais avez-vous trouvé sa fleur préférée... la sienne?... Claude se mordit les lèvres et reprit le mot de la jeune femme. "Il n'y a que les maladroits pour être vraiment sincères. — Ecoutez, poursuivit Geneviève, avec une précaution discrète et d'un ton bas. Vous avez vu Dabzac, le peintre, à la maison. Saviez-vous que Dabzac... — Vous avait priée aussi de pressentir Claire? balbutia le jeune homme. — Oui. Mais, soyez tranquille; j'ai jugé qu'il était équitable de ne point la pressentir du tout et de la laisser étourdissement me révéler, de qui, entre vous deux, elle attendait sa fleur de prédilection." Claude souffrait d'une angoisse neuve; il ne trouvait rien à répondre à ces "raisons de femmes," comme avait dit Pierre Brienne...

Lorsque la porte s'ouvrit bruyamment et la jeune fille entra, avec précipitation... "Grande sœur, s'écria-t-elle toute joyeuse, trop joyeuse—sans prendre même garde à la présence de Claude—M. Dabzac qui est là... Viens donc le recevoir, ma chérie." Et, avec une grâce charmante et une supplication si inconsciemment étourdie: "Tu vas le re-

tenir à dîner, pas, grande sœur?... Mme Brienne fixa Claude, avec une pitié douce et une tendresse de consolation. "Vous serez également des nôtres, Claude? demanda-t-elle. — Oh! M. Claude est de la maison, lui, fit Claire... ce n'est pas la même chose..."

Alors, Claude vit un nuage glisser devant ses yeux; son esprit chancela—une seconde... Il vit la nuance, la nuance imprécise. Non, ce n'était pas la même chose. Il se reprit; et ses yeux allèrent aux roses pâles qui mouraient dans la potiche de grès. Il lui sembla que la potiche se brisait... et que son cœur aussi se brisait... et que les pétales s'éparpillaient, ainsi qu'une jonchée de fleurs inutiles. Il fit un effort surhumain sur lui-même; il regarda la jeune femme et il regarda la jeune fille; et il regarda Geneviève et Claire, avec le même regret mélancolique du passé évanoui dans une confiance et du présent écroulé sur une parole légère. Puis, inventant soudain un subterfuge et s'aidant d'un mensonge facile: "J'étais venu, précisément, dit-il, pour prendre congé de vous. Je pars, dès ce soir, pour Cannes, où un ami véritable, un autre moi-même pour ne pas dire moi-même, est bien mal... bien mal. C'est un devoir que je dois remplir. — Vous avez raison, dit Mme Brienne, qui avait compris, à travers la transparence du mensonge... il faut toujours remplir son devoir. — Ah! vous partez au pays des roses, ajouta Claire, avec son enjouement familier... Vous nous en enverrez de là-bas, dites, monsieur Claude? — Je n'y manquerai pas, mademoiselle," fit le jeune homme.

...Et Claude sortit, déçu, désespéré, laissant à son rival le soin de découvrir la fleur de prédilection de la jeune fille.



## UP TO DATE

WIFE (*to husband*)—Conceal yourself, my lover is coming!

## TIME

TIME is not made of months or days—  
 Too well this truth I know;  
 Surely, the hour of our first kiss  
 Was centuries ago.

Close, close our parting followed it;  
 Yet, reckon as men may,  
 Surely, our anguish of farewell  
 Was only yesterday!

THEODOSIA GARRISON.



## YES, INDEED!

LITTLE BROTHER—Jack, what is a chaperon?  
 OLDER BROTHER—Oh, that's the French name for an infernal nuisance!



## AFTER THE BETROTHAL

DEAR Love, good night. Here, where our spirits are  
 Raised to the summit-grandeur of this night,  
 There comes no sound of worldly din or jar;  
 Dear Love, good night!  
 Our hearts are folded in a peace as far  
 From strife as noontide hour from the night;  
 In joy as wide from pain as star from star.  
 Yesterday, shadow-shrouded, takes her flight,  
 To-day has drawn the strong, dividing bar:  
 Now—life and love together, and delight!  
 Dear Love, good night.

NANNIE BYRD TURNER.



## A SERIOUS GAME

“PAPA,” said little Tommy Taddells, “what is the game of authors?”  
 “The game of authors, Tommy,” replied Mr. Taddells, “is to sell their books.”

# THE TALE OF A PORCELAIN TUB

By Katharine La Farge Norton

“SAY,” said Billy, “did you hear about the circus we had at our house the other night? It was a peach, considering that the centre of the disturbance was nothing but a china bath-tub, like a canary bird’s, or a hotel vegetable dish—same thing, only larger.

“Well, as I was saying, it was Saturday night, and I came home pretty late. I wasn’t particularly anxious for the folks to know what time I got in, as the governor has had a notion to mow down my allowance for a couple of moons now. He’s always prattling about early worms and birds and that sort of thing.

I could see my fond parents waiting for me with tracts, but I braced the game, and went in. Nothing doing—no parental greetings—house like a tomb. Then I heard a soft peep from the head of the stairs: ‘Billy, is that you?’

“‘Sure,’ says I, ‘were you looking for anybody else?’

“‘Come on up,’ says Sis, ‘there’s a lot doing.’

“‘In a minute,’ says I. I located the ice-water tank, imbibed freely, and, with some difficulty, reached the upper deck.

“The proud and happy author of my being and the publisher of the same were doing some kind of a splash act. ‘Oh, Billy,’ says Sis, ‘I’m so glad you’ve come—we’re all going to be drowned!’

“Sis was skylarking around the main cabin in a stripy thing she calls her bath-robe, and my fond parents were similarly attired. ‘William,’ says the governor, ‘it’s half-past two, and you

may as well spend the rest of the night profitably. We are all much wearied with the unaccustomed exertion.’ With this, he handed me a pail.

“The city water supply was backing up into the tub, and the family was dipping it out and pouring it into the wash-bowl. I could see what would happen if we didn’t bail it out—the coop would be afloat in about two hours. The more I bailed, the less good it did. I took seventy-eight pails of water out of that thing, and it was no joke, either, as my garret was full of rats from the evening’s merriment.

“‘Who found it?’ asks I.

“‘Me,’ says Sis. ‘When I got ready to get into my crib I came in here for my evening swim, and found the tub filling of its own accord. I sounded the alarm, and piped all hands on deck.’ Of course, that wasn’t her exact language, but it’s the idea.

“I bailed for two straight hours, with Sis encouraging me and asking me not to swear. The hinge in my back got rusty, and then my brain cells began to work. ‘See here,’ I says to Sis, ‘you bail a while. I’m going after a plumber.’

“‘Plumber!’ says she, ‘what plumber do you think would come here at half-past four on Sunday morning?’

“‘It’ll be five by the time I pipe his nobs,’ says I, ‘and plumbers ought to be up early, even on Sunday morning. The early bird gets the worm. Money’ll bring him, and he can look to the governor for it.’

“‘All right,’ says Sis, ‘I’ll bail.’

“While we were talking, the tub filled itself again. The water rose in

distinct tides, or jerks, and I couldn't seem to make any headway. Sis said that when I had a good start, she'd screech for help, and get the rest of the family at it again. They'd had two hours of good sleep.

"Well, I hiked off down the avenue without the faintest notion of the plumber quarter. I woke up a drug-gist, who cussed me good and plenty when he found I only wanted to look in the directory, and he slammed the door in my face without giving me a chance at his sainted book. Then I piped a jay rolling toward me, and, as he seemed respectable, I flagged him.

"Kind sir," says I, 'will you put me next to a pipe doctor?'

"Says he, 'Young man, I don't understand your language—I'm a throat specialist myself.'

"That doesn't answer the specifications," I said. 'I don't want a germ chaser—merely a lead-pipe doctor.'

"Oh," says he, and he located a joint for me where the plumber slept upstairs. 'Is there a night bell?' says I. 'Dunno,' says he, 'you'll have to rap.' I picked up a brick to rap with and sailed on. The morning air was pleasant enough, but I thought Sis wasn't enjoying herself, so I oiled my castors, and smoked up till I struck the joint.

"I pounded and yelled till I was hoarse, then a frowsy voice inside said: 'Did some wan rap?'

"Some wan did," says I. 'I want the plumber double quick.'

"There was a long discussion inside, then the plumber himself condescended to speak to me. 'I can't wurk on a Sondag,' says he, 'it's ferninst the rules iv the union.'

"Union be blowed!" says I; 'five people are drowning. It's twenty-five to you if you save our lives.'

"Oi'll come," says he, 'fer the sake iv the errand iv mercy.' He wanted to stroke the sugar first, but I told him me wad was in me other garments, so he hooked up his kit, and we started. He went to sleep a couple of times on

the way, but we finally made the harbor, and dropped anchor.

"On deck, there was no change in the scenery. Author, publisher and Sis were still bailing out the tub when I introduced the plumber.

"William," says the governor, 'you're a bright lad.' Sis screeched and flew the coop on account of not being dressed for company.

"How long have yez been doing this?" says the plumber.

"Since ten P.M.—last P.M.," says the governor, mopping his marble brow.

"Why didn't you put in the plug iv the tub, lay a brick on it, and go to bed?" asks the plumber.

"Never thought of it," says I, feeling like a fool.

"The plumber got out his kit, unscrewed the trap of the wash-bowl, and gave something a push to the left. 'Yer trap was stopped up,' he says, 'and that sint the wather to the tub. 'Tis the same wather,' he says; 'you can see how soiled it is from bailing it so frequent.'

"Wouldn't that jar you? We'd been transferring the same water all night from tub to bowl and back again.

"Give me the twinty-five," says the plumber.

"I'll not do it," says the governor, getting red.

"The young buck promised," says the plumber, 'otherwise I wouldn't have came. It's ferninst the rules iv the union to wurk on the Sabb'th.'

"All right," says the governor, 'you shall have it. It'll come out of your allowance, William.'

"I let the man out, and he says: 'Can I leave me kit in the entry till I come back?'

"I suppose so," says I, feeling grouchy. 'Where are you going?'

"I'm going to early mass," says the plumber, 'to praise God fer me brains. The top of the mornin' to yer honor.'

"Cheap? I felt like twenty-nine cents, marked down from thirty!"





## LE SENTIER

NE rêvons pas d'autre joie  
Que celle qui nous envoie  
Le Dieu propice à l'Amour,  
À l'Amour inalterable,  
Bien plus vrai, bien plus durable  
Que tous nos désirs d'un jour!

D'une main qui déjà tremble  
Ne cueillons sur les chemins,  
La fleur des espoirs humains,  
Mais aimons souffrir ensemble,  
Et tous deux levons les yeux  
Vers la même étoile aux cieux.

Et pas à pas, l'un pour l'autre  
Gardant notre cœur entier,  
Et la Croix qui seule est nôtre  
Gravissons l'obscur sentier,  
Jusqu'à la cime que dore  
Les rayons d'une autre Aurore!

VICOMTE J. DE BEAUFORT.



## A GENIUS

TED—What's that actress doing in this wilderness?

NED—Trying to find the fellow who wrote the advertisements of this Summer resort, so that she can engage him as her press-agent.



WHEN a woman tells you that she is not what you think she is, take her word for it—she knows.



THE girl who has just been put into long dresses longs for worship; woman yearns for love.

## WHERE DID WE GO, DEAR?

WHERE did we go, Dear, where did we go,  
 All softly, hand in hand,  
 Following the day  
 Into the dusk, away, away?  
 The white dreams led down the still, dim land,  
 Down to the sea and over the sand:  
 Where did we go, Dear, where did we go?

Where did we go, Dear, where did we go?  
 The Loves, they called us by name,  
 Taught us a song,  
 The still, dim way along, along.  
 Alas, that ever home we came,  
 Home to the world now never the same!  
 Where did we go, Dear, where did we go?

JOHN VANCE CHENEY.



## FROM GENERATION UNTO GENERATION

STELLA—There goes Totty Footlights in the automobile Charlie gave her.  
 She acts as if she had been used to one all her life.

BELLE—I guess it's heredity. Her father used to run a steam-roller.



## A WISE PROVISION

SUMMER GIRL—I'm not quite sure if this bathing-suit will be serviceable enough. The waves are very strong where I'm going.

CLERK—Madame, we guarantee that suit against everything except a moral wave.



LITTLE things tell—children, for instance.

# A TASTE IN COMMON

By John Strange Winter

IT all began over an old dish. I was there, and I saw it personally. Not being desperately interested in old china, I didn't think much of it; but the two maniacs, whose story I am about to tell you, saw in that hideous blue-and-white dish beauties over which they raved—I can use no other word—until they were absolutely silly.

"Such tone!" said he.

"Such color!" said she.

"Such depth!" he declared.

"Such paste!" she murmured.

"Where did you get it, Mr. Winter?" said he.

"Oh," I replied, vaguely, "it came to me. I had an old aunt who died and left it to me."

"Lucky man! And he doesn't appreciate it one bit," said the girl.

"He doesn't deserve to have it," said the man.

"I don't think I do," I admitted. "Is it a priceless treasure?"

"It's worth a lot of money," said Dynevor, bluntly.

"Oh, I thought it might be worth half-a-crown or so."

"Half-a-crown! *Mr. Winter!*" cried my other visitor.

"Well, I'm sorry. I haven't any idea of the value of such things. I wouldn't have bought it for any money, not even for twopence-half-penny. I have it because it was there, and for no other reason."

"But think of the luck of its being there for somebody who doesn't appreciate it!" she cried.

"Oh, I don't know. I appreciate it in its place; it's right enough. The old lady liked it; I kept it, in a way, for her sake—that was all."

I looked up suddenly, almost apologetically. Dynevor was looking straight at her, and looking as a man looks only under certain circumstances. I had never looked at Mrs. Wynnington in that way myself, although I flatter myself that I have as keen an eye for a woman as any man in England. She was a large, luxurious, sleepy thing, almost Oriental in her reposefulness. Masses of coal-black hair, dense and fine, with a natural ripple in it, framed her pale face; her eyes were black and languorous, her nose indefinite, her mouth just a trifle full. She had two rows of pearls within it, perfect in shape and color. Her figure—well, her figure was not her strong point; I wouldn't pretend for a moment that it was; it was the figure of a woman who loved luxury and beautiful things, a woman to whom rich furs, fine laces, clinging silks and sheeny pearls were, if not a necessity, at least a natural adornment. She was still quite young, although she had been married some eight years. She scarcely ever spoke of her husband, who was always out in Assam, grilling on a tea plantation. She was frequently at home, and had a tiny flat of her own in London. I had heard her say that the climate of Assam was impossible for a woman.

"I don't like Assam," I heard her say once, "and Assam doesn't like me. I don't like the climate, and the climate doesn't like me. I don't like the people, and the people don't like me. I can't take any pleasure in driving thirty miles over bad roads, with worse carts, to dance with a lot of men who haven't got one idea among them. Am I fond of my hus-

band? But certainly. I shouldn't have married him else. But I think for white people to live in India is a mistake; certainly, for husbands and wives who live as we have to do, parted half the time, is the greatest mistake of all. If I had my time to go over again, I shouldn't marry as I did. No, I don't feel that I am the least disloyal in saying it. George can't help it; it's his misfortune, and mine; but it is a misfortune, nevertheless."

"There's something," said the lady to whom she had spoken, a few minutes afterward to me, "very uncanny about Mrs. Wynnington, isn't there?"

"I don't know. Is there?"

"Oh, very uncanny. Horrible thing for a woman to say that she wouldn't marry the same man if she had the time to go over again. And yet she pretends to like him. It's preposterous!"

I didn't think it was so preposterous, and I pitied Mrs. Wynnington from the bottom of my heart, pitied her more and more when I realized that people out there thought she had a touch of native blood in her, and that she was more or less tabooed on that account. Well, if Wynnington didn't mind her having a little *pied-à-terre* in London, and coming back now and again to the surface of civilization, like a whale coming to the surface of the water to breathe, I didn't see that it was any business of mine.

In truth, I never thought any more about Mrs. Wynnington, until the day that she and Dynevor, with one or two other people, happened to meet at a little tea-party I was giving in my chambers, and fell in love, the pair of them, with the old blue-and-white dish of which I thought so little. I really don't know whether they had met before or not, but the bond of the taste in common was very strong upon them, and they fell to making a little tour of my rooms. Presently, they were the only two of my guests who were left.

"Are you driving, Mrs. Wynnington?" I asked, when she prepared to take her leave of me.

"Yes, I'm driving," she replied.

"Well, then, take that dish with you. You'll value it much more than I shall. Take it."

"What do you mean?—that you are going to give it to me? I couldn't let you."

"Why not? I set no value on it, I assure you. It's very much of a Yorkshire gift."

"Oh, Mr. Winter! but it has belonged to your family!"

"I don't know. It belonged to my aunt. Goodness only knows where she got it from. I'm sure she would rather somebody had it who valued it than that it should stay here under the tender mercies of my laundress. Take it, Mrs. Wynnington; take it without any compunction. You can send me your photograph as a little return."

She flushed scarlet, and immediately after became as pale as she usually was.

"Indeed," she said, "I will take every care of it. Your old aunt, if she knows that I have it, will know how I value and care for it. It's really too good of you to give it to me. I feel quite distressed. And yet—you don't seem to care for it. Oh, Mr. Winter, how can you part with it?" she burst out.

"Take it away, my dear lady, take it away," I replied. "Here, let me wrap it up in this paper, and I'll carry it down to the carriage for you."

I followed her down to the carriage, followed with an intense sense of amusement at the idea of my aunt—who, by-the-bye, had been my great-aunt—troubling herself amid the glories of heaven, in which she fervently believed, about the fate of a blue-and-white dish which she had left behind her on earth. I think I had never realized the intensity of the china mania before that afternoon.

Mrs. Wynnington got into the carriage, and settled herself down among her furs. "Put it on the seat beside

me," she said, "so that I can hold it. It might get damaged if you put it into the hood."

So, I put the old dish down on the seat of the victoria, and she placed her left hand protectingly on it while she held out her right one to me.

"Good-bye, Mr. Winter," she said. "I shall never forget your kindness to-day. I believe that Mr. Dynevor is fit to eat me."

"Oh, Mr. Dynevor is a good chap," I replied.

"Oh, yes, yes; I don't mean that—but didn't you see how he hankered after the dish?"

"I'm afraid I haven't got another for him, Mrs. Wynnington," I said, in much amusement.

She smiled back at me as she drove away, and I stood on the edge of the curb, looking after her and thinking what a pity it was that things had not gone altogether well with her. True, she had her little *pied-à-terre* in town; she had her victoria, beautiful clothes and a pleasant circle of friends. What wonder that she reconciled it to her conscience that her husband should be all the time in Assam?

## II

It seemed to me that from this time I was always running across John Dynevor and Mrs. Wynnington together. It was about this time that I met and fell in love with the lady who afterward became my wife. With us, furnishing was a serious matter, for we were neither of us over-blessed with this world's goods, and, as my fiancée had a great taste for what I call elegant old furniture, I spent a good deal of time in foraging about among the antiquity shops.

It happened one day that I was quite at the other end of the world, in Notting Hill High street. I had got scent of a Sheraton sideboard which was going dirt cheap, so I walked into the shop, and told the young man who came forward what I wanted—not that I wanted a Sheraton sideboard—by no

means. I told him that I required a sideboard, and that I should like something old. Had he anything of the kind to show me? He told me they had three or four very nice sideboards, and asked me to come into the "room through" as he put it.

While I was waiting for him to draw one or two pieces of furniture away from the sideboard, which was at the back, I heard Mrs. Wynnington's voice in some upper region.

"And that is positively the lowest you will take for it?" she said.

"I really couldn't take a lower price than that, madame," was the reply.

"It's too much," said Mrs. Wynnington, decidedly. The voice was coming nearer; evidently, she was on her way down-stairs.

"No, madame, it's not too much. It's well worth the price to any buyer. Your lady," he added, apparently speaking to a third person, "does love a bargain."

I heard a man laugh, but he did not speak, and I awaited the descent of the trio with some interest, because I felt that at last I was about to see Mrs. Wynnington's husband, and she had not told me that there was any prospect of his coming home.

The next moment, Mrs. Wynnington, beautifully dressed as usual, but in a simple morning frock, reached the level of the shop; and immediately following her was, if you please, John Dynevor!

"Now, my dear Mr. Winter," she cried, as she caught sight of me, "is that you? Mr. Dynevor and I met here in the most curious way, didn't we, Mr. Dynevor?"

"We did," said Mr. Dynevor, unhesitatingly.

Unfortunately, I happened to be looking full at the face of the third person, and it was such a complete giveaway to their accidental meeting that I felt I had unwittingly put my foot into other people's business.

"And what are you after this morning?" I said, addressing her.

"Well, I came in after a little cabi-



net that Mr. Lazarus possesses. He's very hard to move from his price."

"I never 'bate my price," said Lazarus; "it's a bad business. Put a fair price on it at the beginning—that is, put on a moderate profit to the price you gave for the article—and stick to it. That's my motto, and I've found it pays me very well. Asking three times as much as you intend to take is a waste of time, and it's a degradation to the intellect. I never do it."

I burst out laughing. I had known old Lazarus for some years, as I generally went to him when I wanted to give a wedding present, and although I had never heard him express his sentiments before, for I had never tried to cheapen his goods, I felt that what he said was absolutely true.

"What Mr. Dynevor came for—" Mrs. Wynnington began.

"Pewter," said Dynevor.

"Ah, yes, pewter. Make your harvest while the sun shines, Mr. Dynevor; you'll not have the chance of it long. One of these fine days there'll be a rush after pewter, and then you'll have to pay—oh, won't you have to pay for every little bit you buy!"

"No, I sha'n't," said he, "for by that time I shall have got as much as I want, and I shall have gone on to fresh fields and pastures new. I expect I shall be collecting oxidized copper, or something equally silly."

The tone of both was admirably careless, but it did not take me in, not for one single moment. That is one of the advantages of being a poor scribbler who writes love-stories. Such a one gets into the habit of noting little things which would pass the observation even of the keenest brain. I admit that it was admirably done that morning, but it did not for a moment deceive me.

After that, it seemed to me that I met them continually.

"Dynevor is a great pal of yours?" I said to her one day, when I chanced to meet her in a Bond-street tea-room.

She looked a little startled. "Ye-s," she said, almost hesitatingly. "I don't

know that I should call him exactly a pal, Mr. Winter."

"No? What name would you call it by?"

She reddened a little, and, mind you, it was a very wonderful thing to see Mrs. Wynnington redden, because she was so pale, her complexion was so pure, and her manner was so quiet, not to say lethargic, that it seemed almost preposterous to think that it was possible for her to blush.

"You see," she said, almost deprecatingly, "we have a taste in common."

"H'm, yes; I suppose you have. What is the latest development of it? Is it still pewter?"

"Well, it's rather taken the form of old books—rare editions," said she.

"I see. What are you going to do with them when you go back to India?"

"Oh, I'm not collecting old books. As for my flat, I leave it exactly where it is; it's quite simple."

"Oh, I see," I replied.

Well, after that I got married, and therefore did not want to trouble myself any more about the doings of either Mrs. Wynnington or Dynevor. But, about two months after Nell and I had settled down in our modest quarters, I ran across the pair of them again. I thought myself fairly sharp; but Nell was sharper than I.

"I say, Jack," said she to me, "that Mrs. Wynnington—is she all right?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Oh, she is. I shouldn't have thought it. Where's the husband?"

"He's in India, I suppose."

"You suppose? How funny!"

"The climate, you know," I remarked. "Very difficult thing for a woman to live in those wild parts where he is."

"He lives there?" said Nell, drily. "If you should get to be appointed as consul to Timbuctoo, would you expect me to go with you?"

"I shouldn't expect you to remain with me if it was proved that your health couldn't stand the climate," I said, almost austere.

"Oh, you wouldn't? Well, we'll remember that, if you please."

"Yes, certainly we'll remember it. But, all the same, I'm not likely to be appointed consul to Timbuctoo, or anywhere else. As for Mrs. Wynnington, I'm sorry for her. She married a fellow she liked very much, and she doesn't get on in Assam."

"Doesn't get on with him?" said Nell.

"Yes, I think so. I think he's very fond of her—I think in her way she's very fond of him—but, still, the climate doesn't suit her. He's a tea planter with a big property. It means everything that makes life worth living for both of them that he should stop there and look after his own interests; but the climate doesn't suit her, the people don't like her—they think she's got a touch of the tar-brush about her."

"She might have," said Nell, judicially, "she might; but it's a long way back if she has. She's a beautiful creature."

"Would you call her beautiful?"

"No, I shouldn't; but still, she's a beautiful creature, soft and sleek, and full of ideas; not much energy, not much go, soft, kind, gentle, womanly and yearning for love."

"She's all right, Nell; don't worry about her. Dynevor's safe enough."

"Can't bear Mr. Dynevor," said Nell.

"Why not?"

"Oh, he's slinky," cried my down-right spouse. "I hate slinky men—lantern-jawed, ascetic, artistic without doing anything. He always has cold hands, and he doesn't give you the idea of having a warm heart. I suppose she's the type of woman that would chum up with a Dynevor."

"Well, she has done so anyway, and it's no mortal business of ours. She didn't meet him through either of us; she's not a very intimate friend of either of us; she's not a child, she's a married woman who has seen a great deal of the world. She must row her own boat, and keep it upright. We can't pretend to steer it for her. Besides, she might very much resent our even trying."

"I wasn't thinking of attempting such a task," said Nell; "I only asked. I don't know all your friends yet. I asked it from the idlest motives, I assure you."

A few days after this, we gave a little tea-party, a very modest affair, of course, for our means were modest, and our friends were not too expectant of us. I was rather surprised to see Dynevor and Mrs. Wynnington come in together.

"I didn't know you had asked them," I said to Nell, as I passed her by.

"Well, I didn't ask them—at least, I mean I asked them only yesterday. I forgot to tell you," she said, quite penitently. "The truth was, Jack, she looked so yearning, and so down on her luck generally, that I asked her to come. I thought it would cheer the poor thing up a little. And then she hinted that she supposed *he* was asked, and I didn't like to say no, and I let her think it was a mere scratch thing. It was very weak of me," she said, penitently; "it was more than weak, but—I did it."

I laughed, and just touched her hand as we parted. So, my Nell's soft heart had gone out in a sort of gush to the poor, graceful, misunderstood widow. Poor Nell! I couldn't stop to think it over then, however, and I made my way to where Mrs. Wynnington was standing, admiring an old plate which was the very joy of my wife's soul.

"You like that plate?" I asked.

"It's exquisite," she replied, "exquisite."

"Picked anything up lately?" I inquired.

"Well, we had a find this morning. I think it will turn out to be a fairly big one."

"Oh, you and—er—?" I jerked my head in the direction of Dynevor, and Mrs. Wynnington went guiltily red. "I understand."

"Yes. We have such a taste in common!" she declared.

"Yes, you have—yes, I know it. It's a fine thing to have a taste in common with any one, isn't it? It helps

things along so! What did you get, Mrs. Wynnington?"

"A whole set of *bisque* Sèvres medallions," she replied; "filthy, dirty—black as soot, with all their lovely eyes and noses obliterated."

"What did you give for them?"

"You'll laugh when I tell you. *Sixpence each!* Six poor pennies each! And there are eleven of them."

"That was good business. Did you get them, or Dynevor?"

"Well, I've put two or three big finds in Mr. Dynevor's way lately—I don't collect books, you know—and he found these out, and bought them for me. I'm going to have them mounted on blue glass—lovely, sapphire-blue glass."

"On glass?"

"Yes, it shows them up so. And for the frames, gold, or black-and-gold—it's immaterial. They are quite beautiful."

"I'm sure they must be. You'll have a whole circle, or star, or something, made of them?"

"Something of that kind."

"You're a great pal of Dynevor's, aren't you?" I asked.

Again she looked at me in a startled kind of way. "Ye-s," she said, "I suppose we are pals, as you call it. Mr. Winter, I'm so sorry for him, somehow."

"Sorry?" I said. "For Dynevor! Are you? And why?"

"He is an unhappy man."

"Oh, is he? I didn't know."

"But you have known him quite a long time. He tells me you were almost boys together."

"Yes, we were—yes. That doesn't mean that one knows a man later on."

"But don't you?"

"I hardly think so. I have enjoyed his acquaintance for a great number of years. That is not quite the same as knowing a man."

"No."

"And Dynevor isn't easy to know."

She looked at me with a world of eloquence in her velvet-brown eyes.

"You don't agree with me?" I said.

"I didn't think you would. Now, tell

me—of course, I'm always curious to know these things—why are you so sorry for Dynevor?"

"He's so unhappy!"

"Is he? What is he unhappy about?"

"He's not—his wife isn't—oh, you know. He's miserably unhappy. They don't hit it off. She's an impossible person."

"Who is?"

"Mrs. Dynevor."

"Impossible? I see nothing impossible about her."

"But you couldn't know her?"

"Couldn't know Mrs. Dynevor! Oh, that's news. Why couldn't you know Mrs. Dynevor?"

"I don't know why. He told me that it was impossible—that she was the kind of person he couldn't introduce anybody to."

"Dynevor told you that?"

"He did."

"My dear girl," I said, gravely, "you may take my word for it that Dynevor's wife is one of the best-known women in London. *She's* the important one of the two, not Dynevor."

"Why isn't she here?"

"To-day? She may be. She may come at any moment. She was here one day last week. She's a journalist of great reputation, although her name doesn't come very much to the front. Dynevor has money and brains; if Dynevor had had brains without money, he might have made some use of them; as it is, he has practically spent his life in dreaming."

"Poor fellow!" She barely breathed the two words, and presently she took her leave of us.

Dynevor went down to the carriage with her, and came up again with his wife, whom he had met on the doorstep.

"So glad to see that you make Johnnie useful, Mrs. Winter," was her greeting to my spouse. "I never can get him to go to the door with ladies when they come to see me."

"Ah, he behaves better here," said Nell, who had the charity not to give the show away.

"Dynevor," I said, presently, to him, "that was a little inopportune, wasn't it?"

"What?"

"Your wife coming to-day?"

"Oh, I don't know."

"I hope, my dear fellow," I said, "that you haven't been giving your friend, Mrs. Wynnington, to understand that my wife's house isn't everything that it should be?"

"I don't understand you," he said, shortly.

"Don't you? I shall explain. Mrs. Wynnington is an old friend of mine. She spoke this afternoon with regret of your cruel luck in not having a happier domestic life, in being tied up to a woman who wasn't all right, whom you couldn't introduce to her, who, practically, was not received in society. She meets that lady in my wife's house, and I require an explanation."

"I have none to give you. I'll take your hint, Winter. I'll not intrude upon you again."

"Very well. And you will be sure to make it right with Mrs. Wynnington, so that no shadow of doubt can rest in her mind about my wife."

"Oh, certainly, certainly. She has misunderstood me, that's all. Of course, the idea that Mrs. Winter's house could not be all right is preposterous."

"No more so than the idea that your wife isn't all right. There's *one* of you who is not all right, Dynevor," I said, taking his arm in a grip of iron, "but it isn't your wife."

"I don't understand you," he said, shortly.

"Don't you? It's like the old story

of the little girl sitting by the fireside with her grandmother and the cat. The grandmother had vexed the little girl, and she said to the cat: 'Pussy, dear, I wish one of us three was dead. I don't mean you, Pussy, and I don't mean me, Pussy, but I do wish one of us three was dead.'"

He gave a sort of angry laugh, and, turning on his heel, walked straight across the room to his wife. What he said to her I do not know, but she looked up, poor woman, with a sort of yearning in her eyes and said: "Won't you wait for me, Johnnie?"

"I'm awfully sorry, I can't," he replied. "I shall be in to dinner, but I've got an appointment I must keep in ten minutes from now."

As he swung out of the door, I went across and asked her to come into the next room, and have some tea. I could swear that there was a suspicious brightness about her eyes, but I was not supposed to see anything, and so I looked discreetly the other way.

A few days later, I received a note by hand from Mrs. Wynnington:

I should have come to say good-bye to you, dear Mr. Winter, and to your charming wife, but I have been so rushed! I am off to Assam, intending to catch the boat at Brindisi. You will understand, I had to go. I intend to stay out quite a long time. If I want change, I shall go up to Simla. Keep a little corner in your hearts for me, you and that charming wife of yours. Think of me sometimes; pity me, if you can, out in the country that I hate, although I shall be with the husband I love. Oh, if only he had money enough to live in London, where surely we should find a taste in common!

Yours always,  
MYRA WYNNINGTON.



MEMORY is the curse of the faithful soul; the unfaithful one forgets and waxes fat.



WHEN we meet our ideal, we never recognize her as it.

## MANNING HER CRAFT

MRS. BERYMORE, a widow, coy and sweet,  
Thus was asked to make a fellow's life complete:

"Your captain, Maud, I want to be—  
The captain of your ship, Maud—  
And sail it down Life's tossing sea;  
Just you and I for the trip, Maud."

Quickly spake the widow, in a voice sedate:  
"No, sir, not my captain, but my second mate."

G. RAY HORTON.



## THE AUTOMOBILE AND THE CART HORSE

A SWIFT Automobile once swept proudly past a Tired Cart Horse.  
"Hello, Old Stick-in-the-Mud!" it called, tauntingly. "Back to the Bone-yard, you Dead One!" So saying, it disappeared in a Cloud of Steam.

A little farther down the Pike, the Tired Cart Horse came upon the Swift Automobile, now Busted.

"Aha!" said the Steed, with a Horse Laugh, "who is Stick-in-the-Mud now? You are indeed far from your Happy Home."

While the Cart Horse was thinking up other Biting Sarcasms of this Nature, they hitched him up to the Damaged Vehicle, and he was compelled to yank it laboriously to the stable, fourteen miles away on an Up Grade.

This fable teaches us that it is Wrong to gloat over the Downfall of our Enemies, until we are sure they can no longer injure us.



## AT THE TWENTIETH REPETITION

NERVOUS PASSENGER (*during gale*)—Shall I be drowned?  
IRASCIBLE SKIPPER—I'm afraid not, mum!



FIRST APPENDICITIS VICTIM—Did you attend the doctor's dinner?  
SECOND VICTIM—No; I couldn't eat a mouthful after seeing him carve.